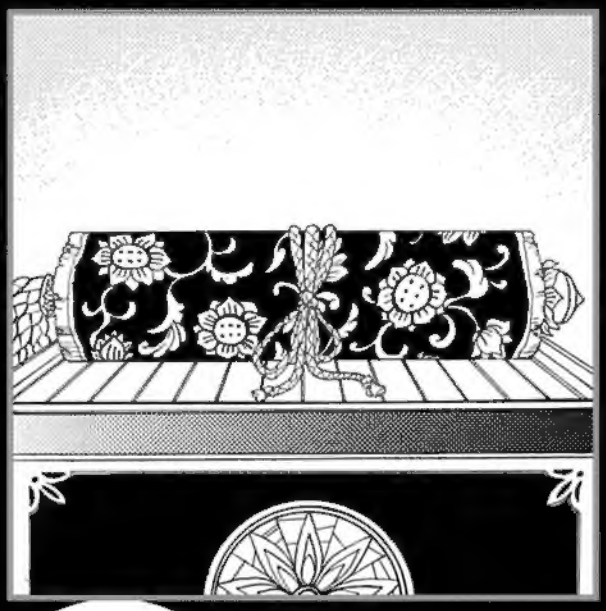
CORPSE PRINCESS

YOSHIICHI AKAHITO

10

CORPSE PRINCESS



10

DEATH MAIDEN SUTRA (ITEM/NOUN)

Sutras held by the Kougon Sect's Ten Great Holy Families. They detail the hidden technique used to revive corpses with lingering regrets as Corpse Princesses. Using resources left behind by the sect's founder, his top ten disciples each wrote out one of the scrolls by hand.
Due to the complexity of the technique, no one has yet managed to perform it as perfectly as the founder once did.

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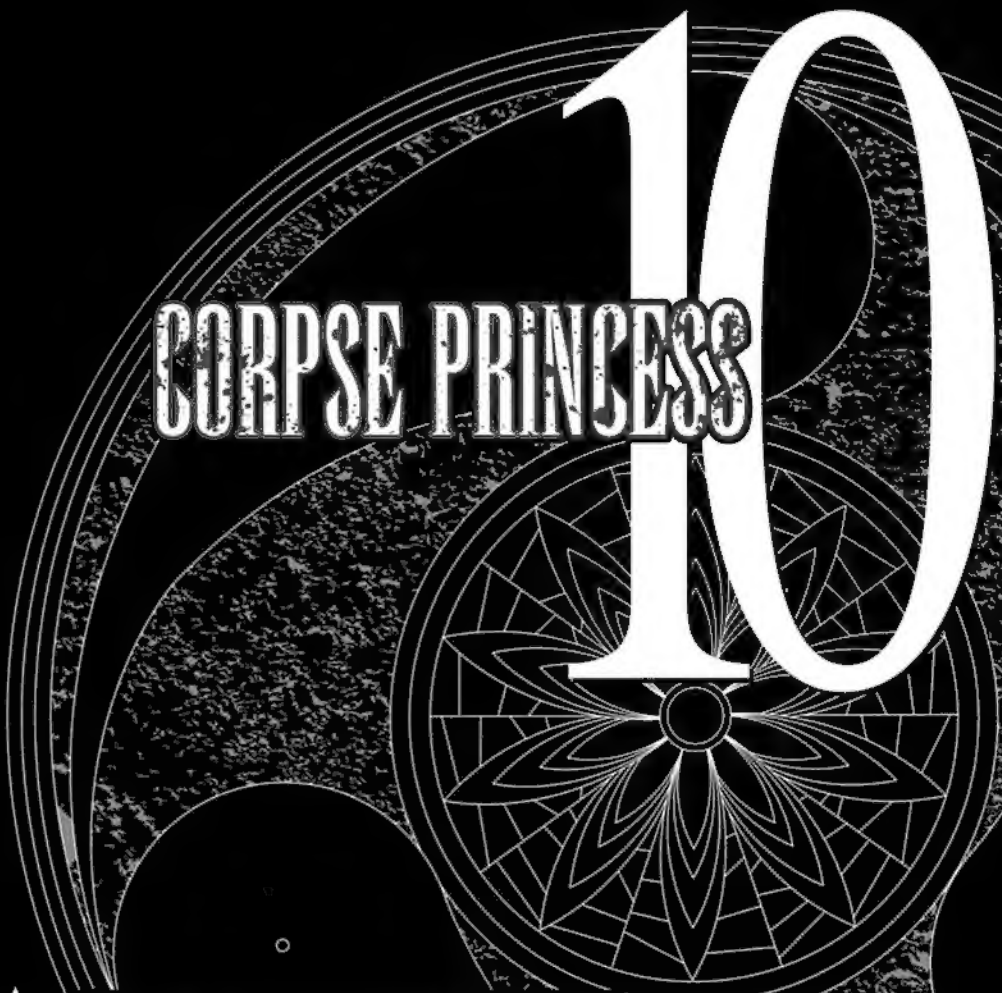

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DEATH 41: ENLIGHTENMENT

AHHHHHHHHHH
SKID
SLIDE
SLIDE
SLIDE
EEK.
TMP
SKID
FWUMP
UGH.
CRACK
OH.
ACK.
CRACK

FSSSHHH
PHEW.
I MANAGED TO STICK THE LANDING.
NOW, LET'S GO FIND MILAM'S TRUE SHIKABANE BODY.
WE'VE GOTTA HURRY, OURI.
AH..... RIGHT.
THE LONGER WE TAKE TO FIND HER, THE LONGER THE SOUJOU AND PROTECTORS UP IN THE MEETING HALL WILL HAVE TO HOLD OUT IN BATTLE.
JUST TO LET YOU KNOW.
!
RISE
OF COURSE..... THEY TRUSTED US TO GO FIND THE REAL BODY.....
WE'D..... BETTER DO IT QUICKLY.
TAKA-MASA !!!
SPLASH

FOOM

CRUNCH
CRUNCH

...THIS PURIFIED, ANTI-SHIKABANE INK STILL WORKS ON THEM..... THEIR MOVEMENTS HAVE SLOWED.
..... SEEMS LIKE...
...EVEN IF THESE UNDEAD ARE JUST MADE FROM MILAM'S HARDENED POWDER ...

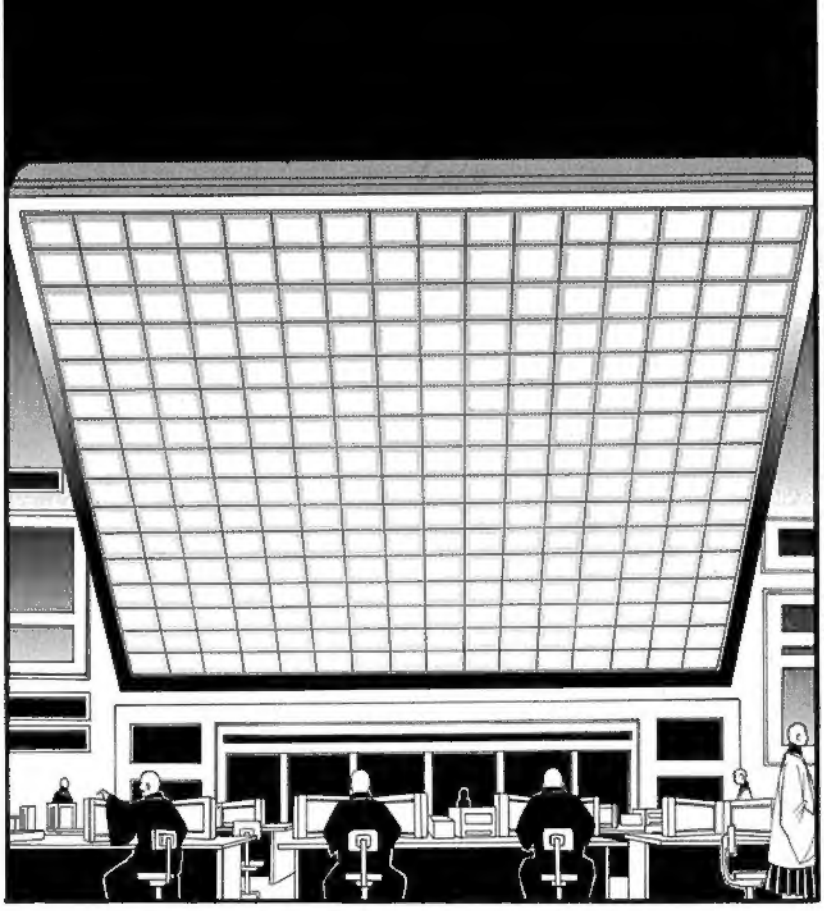
FLOW
FLOW
FLOW
FLOW

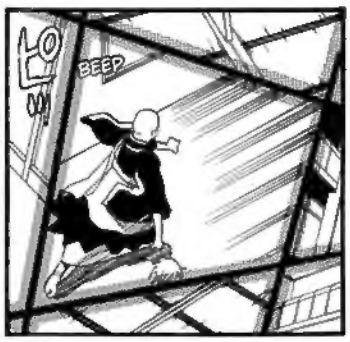
MURMUR
TWIST
TWIST
TWIST

NOW..... I PRAY THAT ALL SHE CAN DO AT THIS POINT IS STARE US DOWN.....
YEAH.
..... EVEN SO...
DRIP
..... PLEASE HURRY, OURI.

DRIP

ME AND TAKAMASA HAVE BREATHED IN TOO MUCH OF THIS POWDER.
SO BEFORE SHE KILLS US BOTH FROM THE INSIDE .....




BEEP

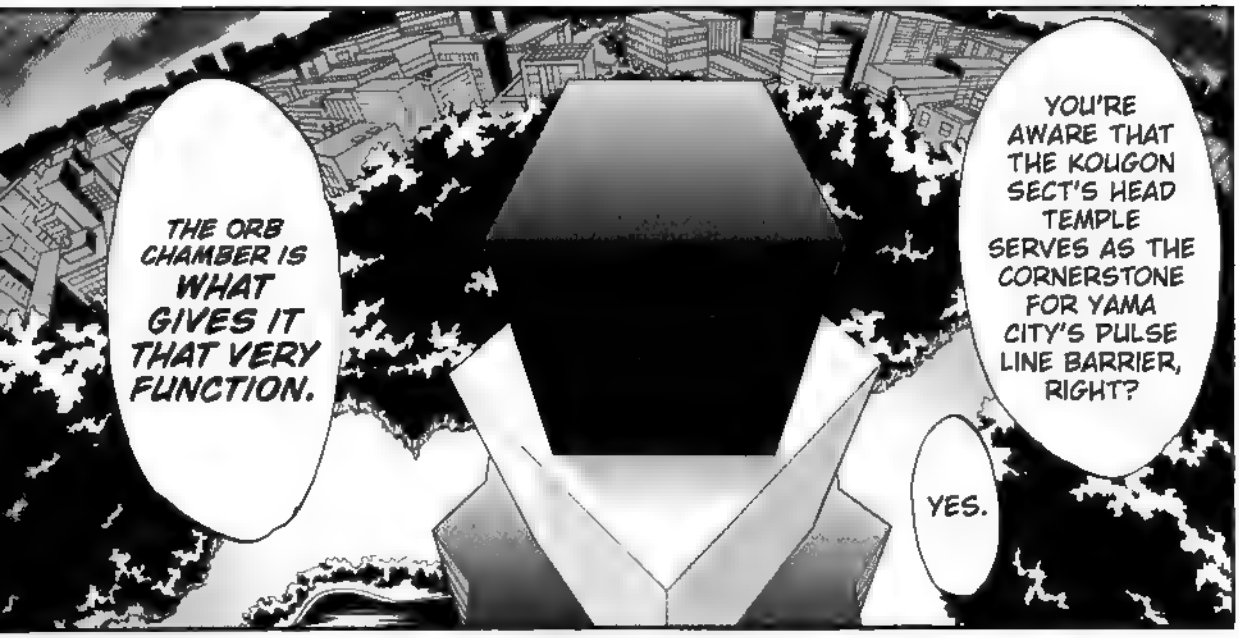
BEEP
BEEP

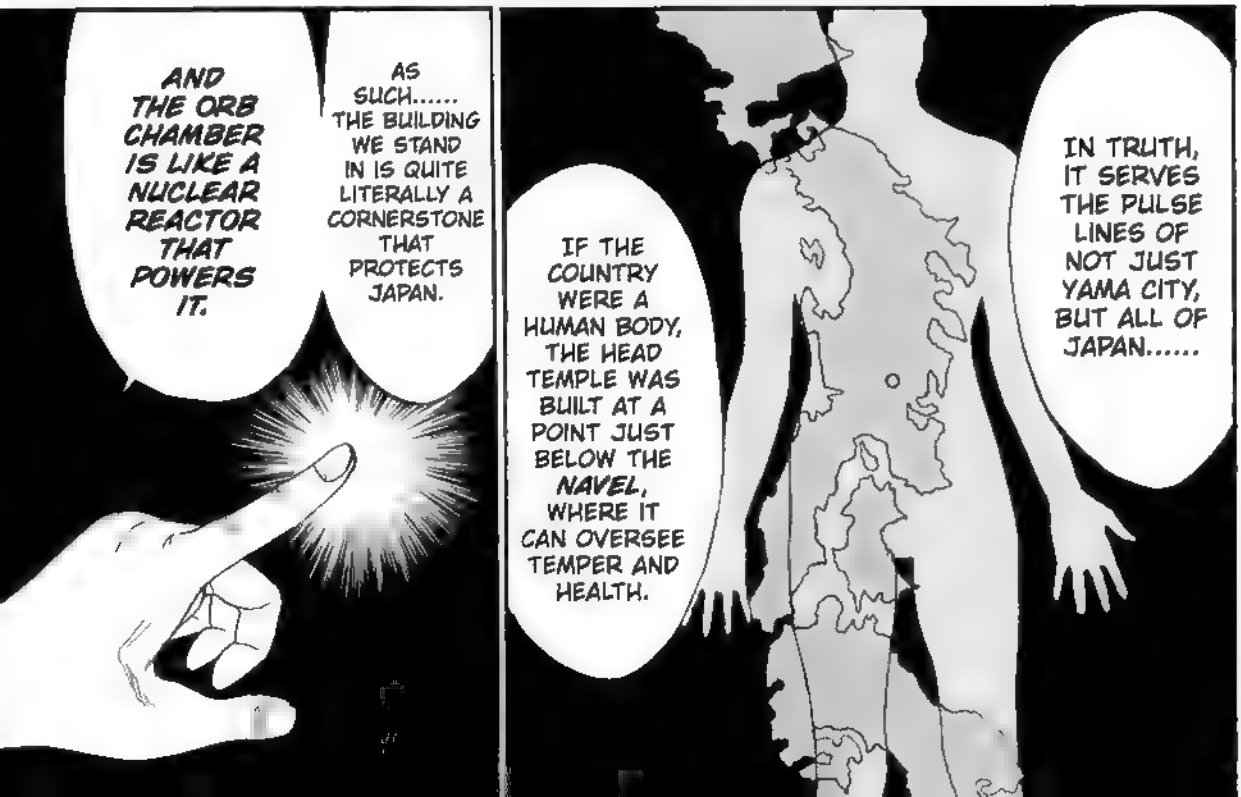
WELL?
HAVE THEY FOUND THE REAL BODY?
NO..... THE ENEMY IS STILL MULTIPLY-ING.....
WE'RE BARELY ABLE TO TRACK THEM ALL WITH SECURITY CAMERAS .....

TAKAMINE..... WHAT OF THE DAI-SOUJOU?
GON-DAISOU-JOU .....
HE'S... ALREADY ENTERED THE ORB CHAMBER.

FROM HERE ON..... WE'LL JUST HAVE TO RELY ON OURI AND THE OTHERS .....
.....I SEE.

ORB CHAMBER ...?
YES..... ONLY THOSE AT GONDAI-SOUJOU LEVEL OR HIGHER ARE PERMITTED NEAR IT, SO IT'S NO WONDER YOU DON'T KNOW OF IT.....
IT'S THE DAI-SOUJOU'S SPECIAL RITUAL CHAMBER, LOCATED AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF THIS HEAD TEMPLE.

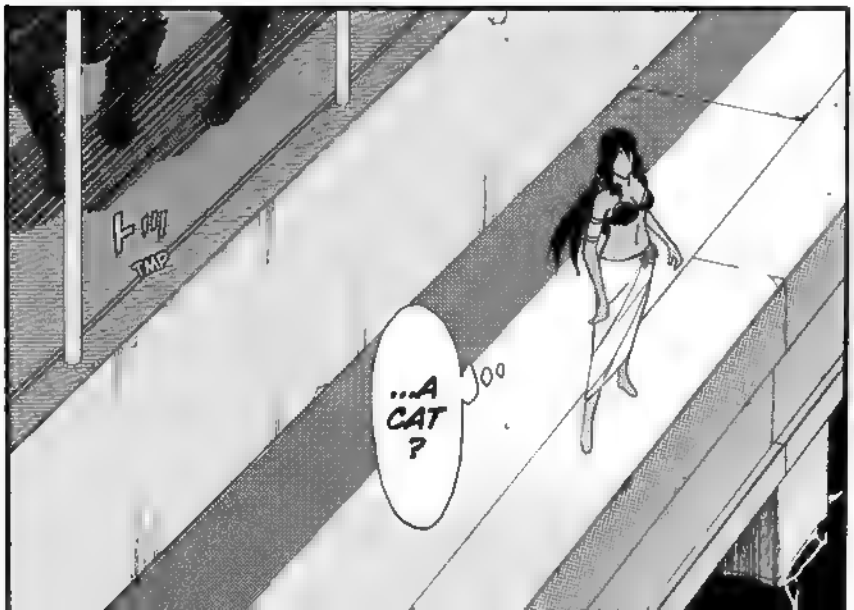

YOU'RE AWARE THAT THE KOUGON SECT'S HEAD TEMPLE SERVES AS THE CORNERSTONE FOR YAMA CITY'S PULSE LINE BARRIER, RIGHT?
YES.
THE ORB CHAMBER IS WHAT GIVES IT THAT VERY FUNCTION.


IN TRUTH, IT SERVES THE PULSE LINES OF NOT JUST YAMA CITY, BUT ALL OF JAPAN.....
IF THE COUNTRY WERE A HUMAN BODY, THE HEAD TEMPLE WAS BUILT AT A POINT JUST BELOW THE NAVEL, WHERE IT CAN OVERSEE TEMPER AND HEALTH.
AS SUCH..... THE BUILDING WE STAND IN IS QUITE LITERALLY A CORNERSTONE THAT PROTECTS JAPAN.
AND THE ORB CHAMBER IS LIKE A NUCLEAR REACTOR THAT POWERS IT.

.....I SEE.
HENCE THE EARLIER PANIC .....?
PRE-CISELY.
FURTHER-MORE..... GUARDING THAT ROOM IS THE MOST CRUCIAL ROLE OF THE KOUGON SECT'S DAI-SOUJOU.
YES!
ANYHOW..... CONTINUE REPORTING TO OUR ACTIVE CONTRACTING MONKS. THEY MUST DISCOVER THE TRUE BODY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
AND ONCE THEY'VE FOUND IT...
... THEN .....
I LEAVE IT TO YOU, KAMIKA. WE CANNOT ALLOW THIS SHIKABANE INVASION TO REACH THE ORB CHAMBER.
YES, TAKAMINE-SAMA.
.....YES.
BREATHE

KAMIKA TODOROKI
.....
"THE STRONGEST CORPSE PRINCESS"
.....
... BUT ...
I WILL BRING DOWN THAT SHI-KABANE.
I EXIST AS "THE STRONGEST" TO PROTECT THE HEAD TEMPLE AND ORB CHAMBER
.....
WILL THEY FIND IT IN TIME .....!?
OURI!!
BANG
BANG

FU FU .....
U FU FU .....
NOW..... IT IS NEARLY TIME FOR THE NIGHTMARE TO DISPERSE AND END .....
AND ALSO TIME FOR ME TO FULFILL MY "CONTRACT"... FU-FU...
FSSHH..
♫
.....I SHOULD LIKE TO PLAY A BIT LONGER THOUGH .....
...
!


TMP
...A CAT ?

CLANK
!
CLANK
CLANK
CLANK
CLANK
BOOM
FWOOSH

TO THINK... SOMEONE HAS ACTUALLY REACHED ME.....
HOW SURPRIS-ING.
.....
PAT
PAT
FINALLY..... OUR SEARCH LED US HERE AND..... NO MISTAKE THIS TIME.
YEAH .....
OURI ?
...REAL BODY.
.....
THAT'S THE SHIKA-BANE'S ...

SHOCK
!?
QUITE CONFIDENT, AREN'T YOU?
TMP
OHH.
APPEAR

STAB
OURI !!
JUMP DOWN THERE ...
TURN
BUT HOW!? SHE..... WARPED !?

YOU WON'T GET AWAY.
U FU FU ...
I CAN'T MOVE .....!!
.....!
WHAT ...?
!?
WIGGLE

U-FU-FU..... WHAT CONFOUNDS ME IS HOW PERCEPTIVE YOU APPARENTLY ARE.
SO ANSWER ME.
HOW .....
... DID YOU KNOW FOR SURE THAT MINE WAS THE REAL BODY, LITTLE BOY?

... I'VE SEEN *SOMETHING LIKE THOSE.*
..... BECAUSE THIS ISN'T THE FIRST TIME.....

SO IT'S AN EMBODIMENT OF REGRET, HUH...?
YEAH... PRETTY SIMILAR, ANYWAY ...
SOMETHING LIKE MY *"SHIKABANE ASSASSINS"?*
EMBODIMENTS OF REGRET, LIKE MY MUMMIES. *BEINGS OF MELDED CONSCIOUSNESS.*
OHH... SO YOU'VE ENCOUNTERED SUCH BEINGS IN THE PAST.

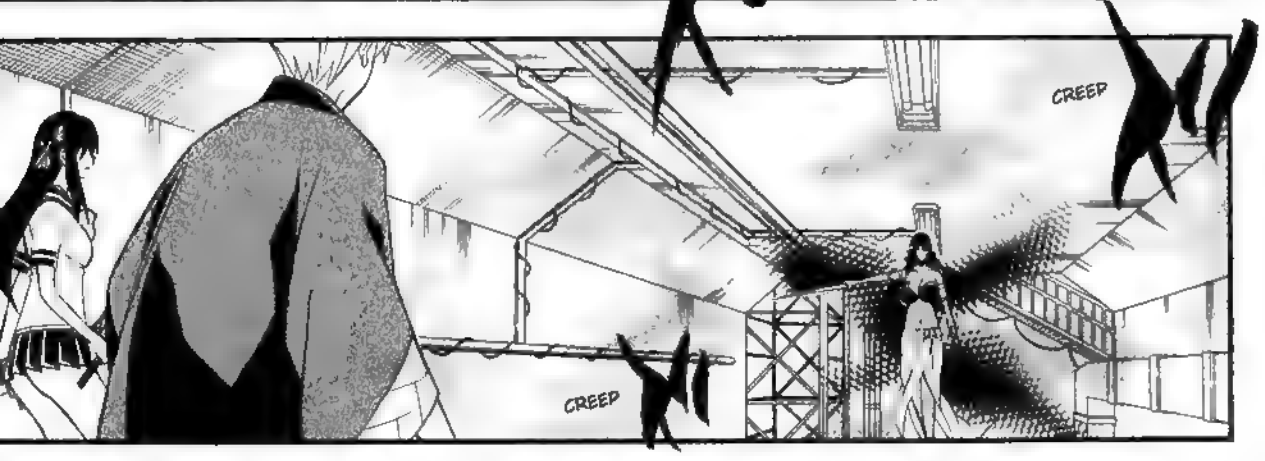
I SEE.
THAT CLEARS THINGS UP.
CREEP
..... BUT NOW I'M AT A LOSS.
FOR AN ASSASSIN'S TRICKS TO BE REVEALED LIKE THIS ...
CREEP
CREEP
IT WOUNDS MY PRIDE AS ONE OF THE KALI.
WHAT SHALL WE DO ABOUT THIS?
SHUDDER
SHUDDER

BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
BOOM
!!
BOOM
OURI !!
TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP

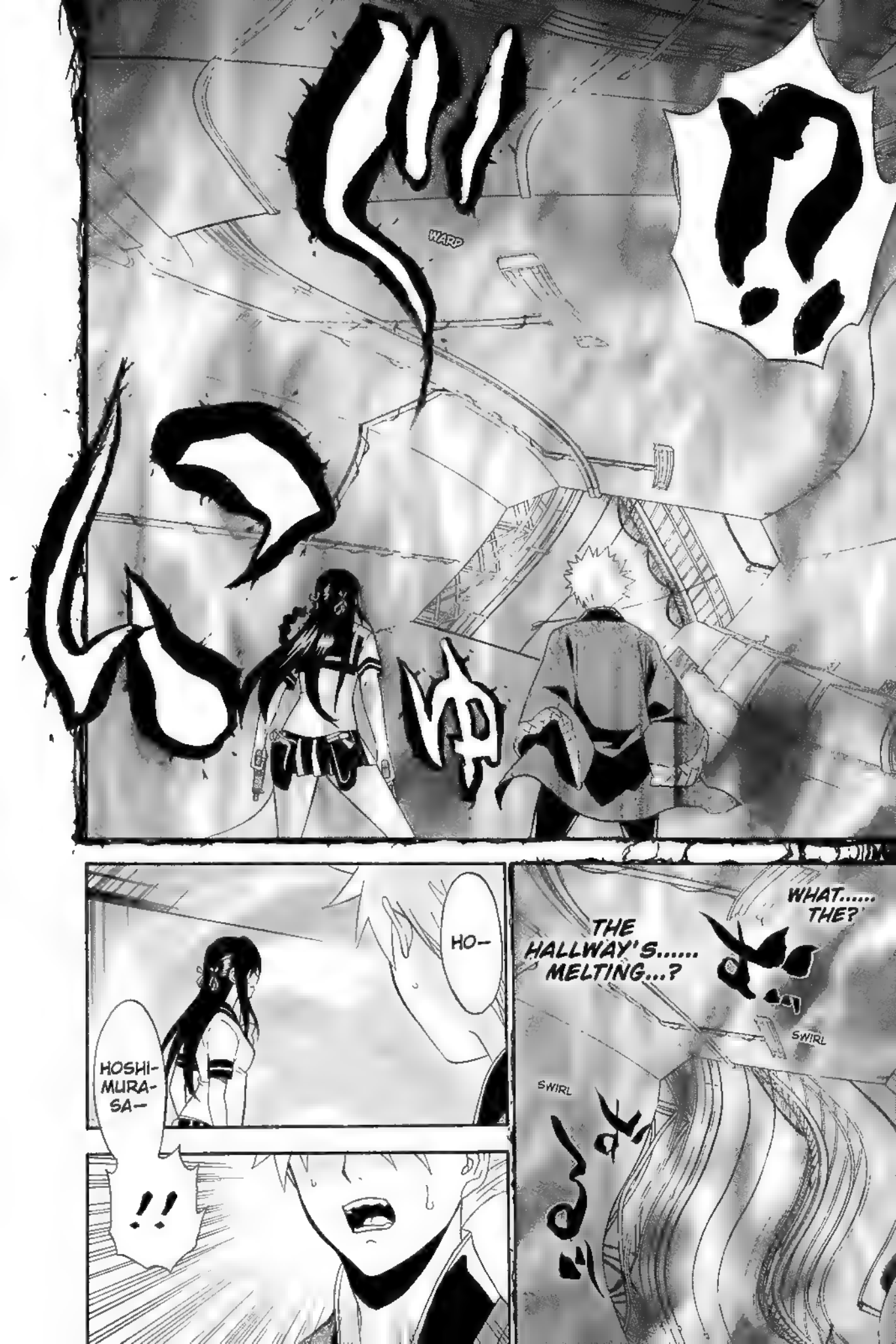
チラ
GLANCE
OUR GOAL IS TO.....
NEVER MIND ME. GO ON AHEAD!!

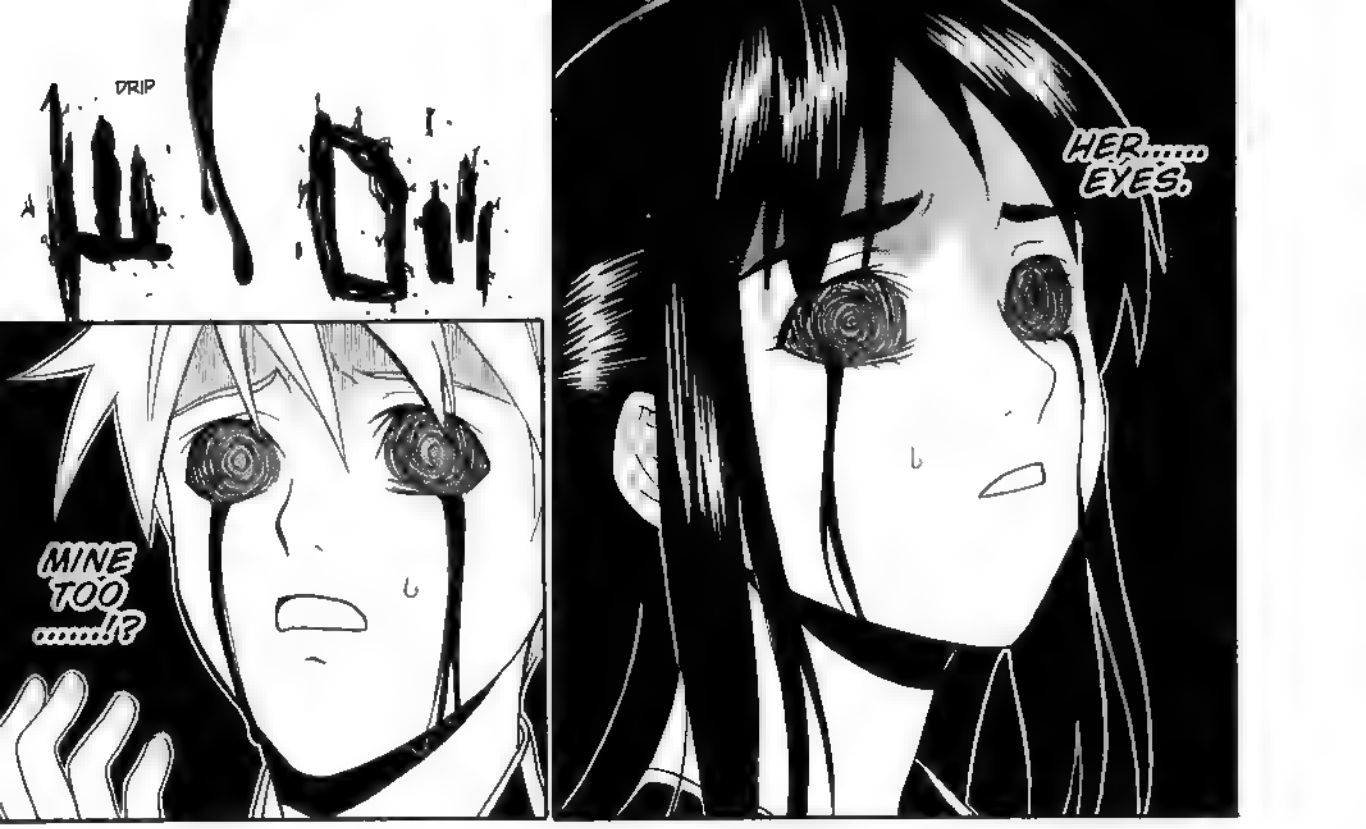
AS I SAID... YOU WON'T GET AWAY.
SHATTER
U FU FU .....

CREEP
FU FU FU.
NOW, MY WOUNDED PRIDE.....
CREEP
...WILL BE HEALED BY YOUR DREAMS .....
CREEP

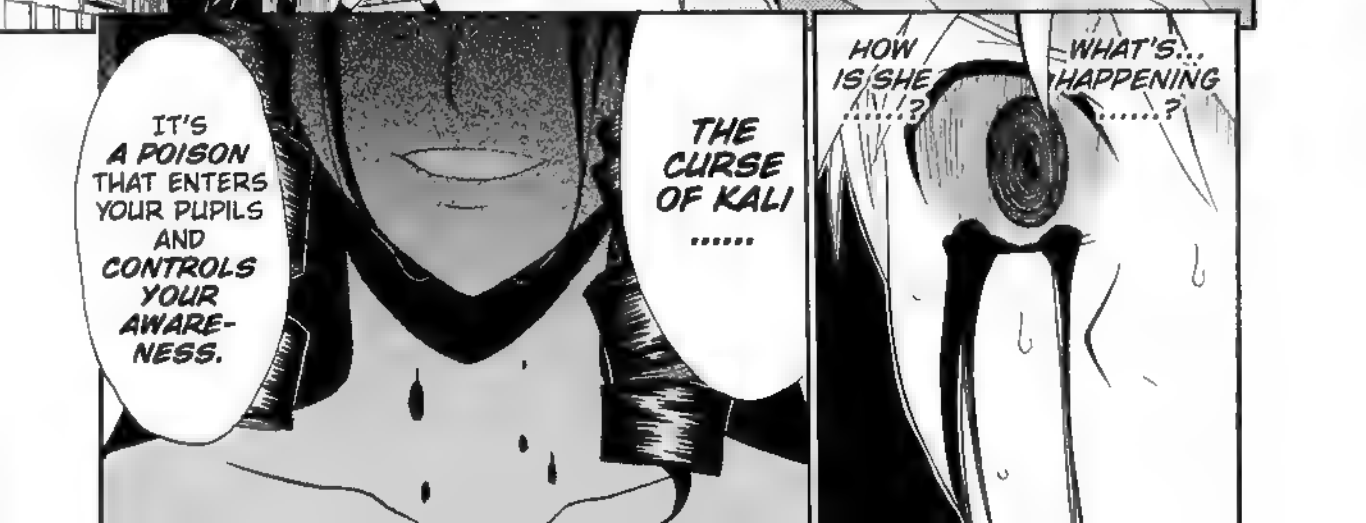

CREEP
CREEP

WARP
WHAT'S SHE...?
.....?
.....


WARP
HO—
HOSHI-MURA-SA—
!!
THE HALLWAY'S..... MELTING...?
WHAT..... THE?
SWIRL
SWIRL


DRIP
HER..... EYES.
MINE TOO .....!?

FIRST..... AS THANKS FOR ANSWERING MY QUESTION.....I'LL TEACH YOU SOMETHING.....
U-FU-FU..... IT SEEMS YOU STILL CAN'T COMPREHEND..... WHAT'S HAPPENING TO YOUR BODIES.


IT'S A POISON THAT ENTERS YOUR PUPILS AND CONTROLS YOUR AWARE-NESS.
THE CURSE OF KALI .....
HOW IS SHE .....!?
WHAT'S... HAPPENING .....?

NOW THAT YOU'VE STARED INTO MY EYES..... THERE'S NO ESCAPING IT.
LOOM
YOUR AWARENESS OF ME WILL GRADUALLY SLIP AWAY.....AND I WILL EVENTUALLY ASSUME CONTROL OVER YOUR FIVE SENSES.
THIS CURSE IS THE REASON WHY WE KALI ARE CALLED ASSASSINS.
LOOM
LOOM
LOOM
LOOM
I AM A CURSED ASSASSIN GOD CAPABLE OF CONTROLLING MINDS, MOVING THROUGH CROWDS INVISIBLY, AND KILLING ALL!!

WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME.....!?
WARP
WHAT.....?
HER VOICE..... I CAN HEAR IT, BUT...IT'S ECHOING, AS IF FROM FAR AWAY.....!!
EVERYTHING'S MELTING, AND MILAM'S GONE.....
!?
WE HAVE TO RUN AWAY..!!
WITH MY CELL PHONE BROKEN, I CAN'T CONTACT THE OTHERS.....
HOSHI-MURA-SA—

RIP
RIP
SPLURT
SHE... DOESN'T NOTICE?
!!? EH .....?
TEAR
SLICE

THIS IS BAD!!
FWIP
FWOOM
RIP
SPLURT
SHUNK
SHUNK
...FU.
APPEAR
U FU FU.
FU-FU .....
CRAP.....!! NO RESPONSE .....!!
HOSHI-MURA-SAN!!
GET AWAY FROM THERE !!
DASH

STAB
!!
.....
TCH.
TEAR
RIP
RIP
TEAR
TEAR
UHH...
AH.
GAH!!
THUD
LOOM
BUT.....
THIS
IS THE
END.
GUH
.....
U-FU-FU...
WRITHING
HUMANS
ARE THE
FRESHEST
OFFERINGS
TO ME.

TCH.
WITHOUT SIGHT, YOU CANNOT SEE ME .....
SOON, EVEN LIGHT WILL VANISH FOR YOU .....
..... GUH.
WRENCH
THAT YOU ARE UNAWARE OF ME...IS THANKS TO MY CONTROL OVER YOUR SENSES.
!!
SQUEEZE

CHOKE
...THE CRIES OF YOUR PARTNER WILL GO UNHEARD.
WITH YOUR HEARING STOLEN ...
PSSHH
SLAM

ABOVE ALL.....
...YOU MIGHT SAY THAT TAKING SIGHT FIRST IS A HABIT OF MINE.
WRENCH
GWAHH
GUH .....
FU-FU..... SOON I WILL CLAIM YOUR SENSE OF TOUCH, BOY, AND YOU WILL NOT EVEN FEEL PAIN. WHAT A SHAME.....
GWAHH .....

CRACK
AH...
...FOR AN ASSASSIN, BEING SEEN IS THE HEIGHT OF SHAMEFUL CARELESS-NESS.
WRENCH
NIBBLE
BE-CAUSE... WELL...
GYAHHH... UHH.
CRACK
GUH...
CRACK
SNAP
!!
RIGHT?
UH!
THUD
A LOVELY SOUND.
U FU FU...

RUSTLE
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
.....
GUH.
TCH...
UNDER THOSE ROBES..... ARE YOU HIDING ANOTHER TOOL, PERHAPS?
GWAH...
UFU-FU.
WHAT NOW?
ROLL
WHAM
!!

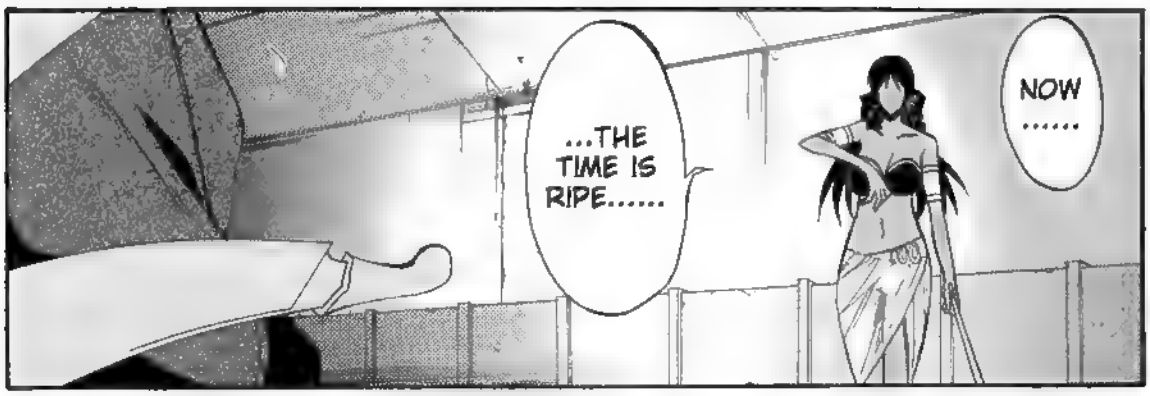
SKID
WHOOSH
LICK
.....
HEH.
SKID
SKID
SKID
SKID
SKID

...
MURA
.....
SAN
.....
HOSHI
.....
WOBBLE
GAHH.
...
ACK.
WHAM

...
SUCH A FLUKE
...
...WILL NOT HAPPEN AGAIN.
EVEN IF I ELUDE YOUR VISION AND HEARING, YOU HOPE TO SAVE EACH OTHER BY RELYING ON YOUR BOND. HOW HEROIC..... BUT...
U FU FU.
SO IT SEEMS YOU TWO ARE TIED BY A "BOND." THAT INVISIBLE CONNECTION.

TWITCH
HOSHI-MURA-SAN, DON'T SPEAK !!
TCH ...
OU... RI.
LET ME TREAT THAT...
.....!
!
OU..... RI.
GRAB
.....!
HAA.
HAA.

FWOOM
...!
!!
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
QUIVER


...THE TIME IS RIPE.....
NOW .....

...AND OFFER YOU BOTH TO MY GOD, DOWN TO THE LAST BIT OF FLESH.
I WILL STEAL YOUR REMAINING SENSES...

SWIRL
SOON YOU WON'T FEEL ANYTHING AT ALL.
U-FU-FU .....YOUR FEAR WON'T LAST LONG.
BECAUSE SOON...
...SIGNALS YOUR DOOM.....
DRIP
VIEWING MY EYES UP CLOSE...
GRAB
!!
CLANG

STEP
CLANG
TAP
STEP
STEP
STEP
STEP
YAP YAP YAP..... YOU TALK TOO MUCH, Y'KNOW ...?
AND ALL THAT TALKING'S SAVED US...
.....SHE HEARD MY VOICE JUST NOW?
HOW HAVE HER SENSES RETURNED ...?
WHAT DID YOU DO?
...
JUST USED SOME EYE DROPS .....
...MADE FROM THESE ANISE LEAVES.
CRACK
FSSHH
FSSSHHH
CRUMBLE

LEAP
SHING
!!
BESIDES, THE LEAVES THEMSELVES ARE DEADLY POISON TO US.....
ANISE... IS IT?
YES, THAT HOLY PLANT MAY BE ABLE TO COUNTER THE CURSES OF THE UNDEAD, BUT..... DON'T LET IT GO TO YOUR HEAD.

... I'LL USE THEM IF I NEED THEM.
STEP
YES ...
EVEN SO ...

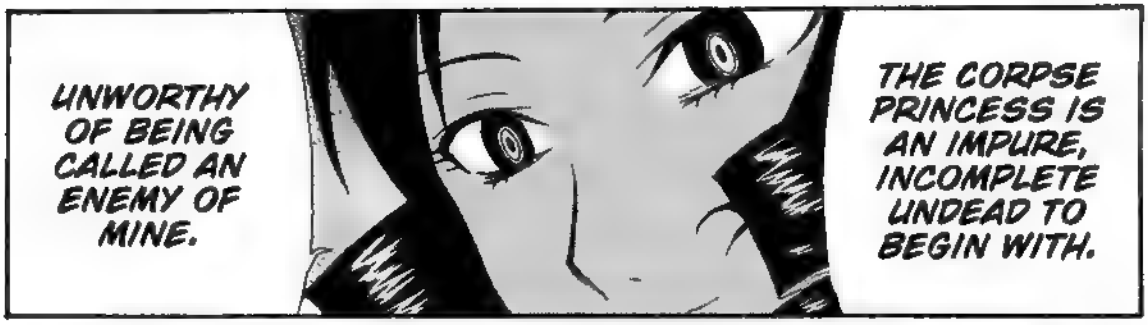
.....
EVEN SO ...

I'VE STILL GOT A SCORE TO SETTLE WITH THE SEVEN STARS!!
FSSSHHH
BECAUSE I CAN'T BE STOPPED HERE, OF ALL PLACES ...!!
SWIRL
SWIRL
SWIRL
SWIRL
SWIRL
SWIRL
SWIRL

OHH .....
IT'S HOSHIMURA-SAN'S CURSE, WHICH CAME ABOUT TO HELP HER BEAT THE SEVEN STARS!! .....IS IT REALLY SAFE TO USE!?
FOOM
HER CURSE .....!!
CLANG
CLANG
SHING
SHING
BUT .....
CLANG
..... NOT BAD. SUCH IS THE POWER OF CURSES.

STAB
STAB
STAB
STAB
STAB
SHATTER
SPLORT
WHA—
I DO NOT FEAR A CURSE THAT ISN'T MADE FOR ME .....
ALSO ...
LOOM

HOSHI-MURA-SAN!!
GAHH.
ACK...
RUSH


UNWORTHY OF BEING CALLED AN ENEMY OF MINE.
THE CORPSE PRINCESS IS AN IMPURE, INCOMPLETE UNDEAD TO BEGIN WITH.

KWAHH...
.....!!
U-FU-FU... BUT THIS HAS BEEN AMUSING, CORPSE PRINCESS.
I THANK YOU.
NOW, GOODBYE.

...AND BECOME AN OFFERING TO MY GOD.
BE SHREDDED INTO 1,000 NIGHTMARES .....
PUSH
PUSH
PUSH
PUSH
GRIND
PUSH
CLENCH
SHINK
IS THAT HOW IT IS?

!!?

UNDER-ESTIMATE CORPSE PRIN-CESSES ...

...AND YOU'LL BE DESTROYED, "KALI."

STEP

!!?
UNDER-ESTIMATE CORPSE PRIN-CESSES ...
...AND YOU'LL BE DESTROYED, "KALI."
STEP

YOU ARE .....
.....!

SWISH
COME TO THINK OF IT..... I COMPLETELY FORGOT TO INTRODUCE MYSELF.
..... ALLOW ME TO DO SO NOW, THEN.

I AM CORPSE PRINCESS TO SOUGEN TAKAMINE-SAMA.
MY NAME IS KAMIKA TODOROKI.
.....! I'VE HEARD OF HER! TAKAMASA TOLD ME .....
...HER NICKNAME.

SO HOW ABOUT WE HAVE A FIGHT?
"THE STRONGEST CORPSE PRINCESS" !!!
SMILE

CORPSE PRINCESS 10

DEATH 42: THE CURSE OF THE STRONGEST

SKETCH-FROM-MEMORY CHAMPIONSHIP: SPECIAL EDITION

WE PICKED A "_____ DOING _____" COMBINATION AT RANDOM AND CAME UP WITH "IZUWA EATING SOMETHING"!!

FLAP
びちぃ
…
FLAP
IZUWA
IZUWA-SAN!! HE FINALLY GETS HIS TIME TO SHINE, AND MY SKETCH DOESN'T EVEN LOOK LIKE HIM. SORRY...
DRAW ME TOO.
SHUT UP, YOU. I'VE BEEN TOTALLY SHUNNED IN PAST VOLUMES.
ONLY IZUWA? NOT FAIR.
BEAN JAM BREAD
LICKING THE BEAN JAM.
YOU...!! THAT'S TOTALLY JUST HIZUCHI !!

THANKS FOR PARTICIPATING!!

FLIK
"THE STRONGEST .....
...CORPSE PRINCESS" .....!!
SWISH

B-BUT ..... HOW'D YOU... ...FIND US...?
OHH ...
THE STRONGEST?

SO WHEN THE SIGNAL WAS SUDDENLY CUT OFF, WE COULD GUESS THAT SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED.
THE PHONE THAT SOUJOU UMEHARA GAVE YOU ALSO ACTED AS A TRANSMITTER.

IT'S FINE.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THIS SHIKA-BANE.
FOR NOW, TAKE HOSHIMURA-SAN AND RETREAT.
EH.....? REALLY...? BUT...
U FU FU .....
.....
FU.
YOU'LL "TAKE CARE OF" M—
STAB

TWIST
BLUB
.....
.....
!!
FAST...

!!
SLICE

"SHUKUCHI" AND OTHER SUCH GAP-CLOSING TECHNIQUES ARE YOUR SPECIALTY .....
... UFU-FU. A SWORDS-WOMAN... NO WONDER.
DRIP
DRIP
SKID
SKID
SPLATTER
SPLATTER

I'VE..... JUST BECOME QUITE INTERESTED IN YOU.
LICK
U FU FU ... FASCI-NATING.

HAS ANYONE EVER TOLD YOU THAT, KALI?
..... YOU TALK TOO MUCH ...

!
..... ANYHOW ...
SUCH IS MY NATURE. I CAN'T CHANGE THAT.
NOR DO I WISH TO.
U FU FU .....

SWIRL
SWIRL
AND HOW DO YOU INTEND TO DEFEAT ME...?
PSSHH
WHER-EVER... DO YOU FIND SUCH CONFI-DENCE?
I'M AFRAID I MUST ASK YOU...
CLANG
...TO SEEK OUT ANSWERS QUICKLY.
IT'S ALSO IN MY NATURE .....
SHING
WHOOSH
...EXPLAIN IT TO ME .....?
SO WON'T YOU...

CHAK
CHAK
UFU-FU..... TRADI-TIONALLY .....
SHING
...THE GODDESS KALI HAS BEEN PORTRAYED AS A BLACK-SKINNED WOMAN WIELDING A FLESH-CARVING BLADE IN EACH OF HER TEN ARMS.
IN OTHER WORDS..... THIS IS THE FORM I'M MEANT TO ASSUME .....!!

.....!! HER ARMS ...

U-FU-FU ..... NOW..... SHALL WE BEGIN?
KALI AGAINST ...
... CORPSE PRINCESS ?

NOW, WHICH..... OF THESE TWO UNDEAD POSSESSES A STRONGER SPIRIT.....

CLASH
LET US FIND OUT!!

GRIND
THRUST
THRUST
THRUST
THRUST
THRUST
WHOOSH
CRACK
STAB
WHOOSH

CLANG
CLANG
CLANG
SLASH
CLANG
SLASH
SLASH
WH—
.....
WHAT!?
.....!!
CLANG
SLASH
SLASH
SLASH
SLASH
THIS
IS.....
NO!!
SLASH
SLASH
SLASH

SLASH

AS LONG AS IT'S A STRAIGHT-UP, ONE-ON-ONE SWORDFIGHT.....!!

WAY TO GO, KAMIKA-SAN.....!
YES.....!
.....!!

FUK

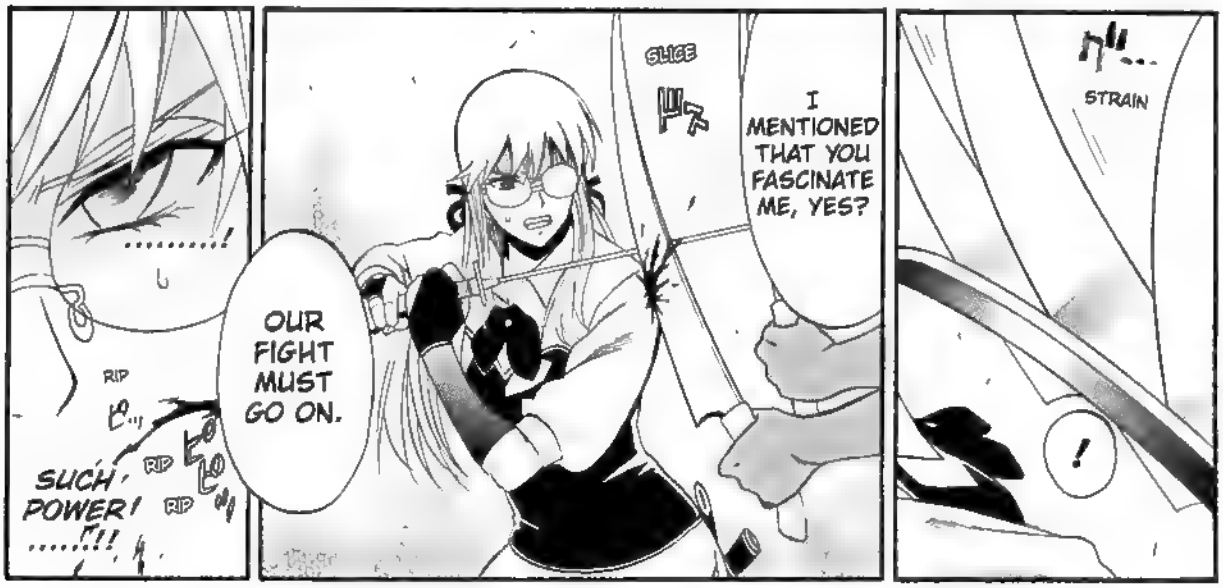
HER ARMS .....
...STRETCHED .....!?
STAB
!!
STAB
SWIRL
FSSHH
SWIRL
SWIRL
CLANG
SLASH
!!

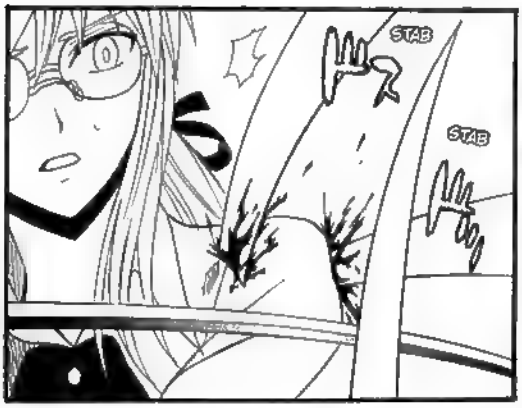
STEP
GRIND
SKID
SKID
SKID
SKID
U FU FU ...
OH .....?
HAA ...
HAA.
WRITHE
WHAT'S WRONG ?
WRITHE
COULDN'T HAVE GUESSED THAT MY ARMS COULD TRANSFORM?
THEY'RE FABRICATIONS TO BEGIN WITH.
U-FU-FU... BUT...
DRIP
BEYOND JUST THAT...

...WHAT YOU REALLY OUGHT TO BE WATCHING FOR IS ...
BLUB
!?
FLIK
NO!!
DON'T LOOK INTO HER EYES !!
!!
BADUM
OUR EYES HAVE ALREADY MET.
FU-FU-FU .....IT'S NO USE.
SLUMPY
Hm... .....!
THUD

FADE
YOUR AWARENESS .....YOUR FIVE SENSES ARE MINE TO MANIPULATE .....
THERE'S NO ESCAPING FROM MY DREAM NOW.
WITH THIS .....
SHU-KUCHI !!
TMP
...!
GRIND
!

GRIND
GRIND
U-FU-FU...
YOU HOPE TO END THIS BEFORE I FADE FROM VIEW?
SUCH IMPATIENCE WON'T DO.


SLICE
I MENTIONED THAT YOU FASCINATE ME, YES?
STRAIN
!
.....!
OUR FIGHT MUST GO ON.
RIP
RIP
RIP
SUCH POWER!
.....!!


STAB
STAB

FADE
DEEPER... DEEPER.
WE OUGHT TO UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER BETTER
.....

CLANG
...!
!
I'M DONE FOR !!
SWIRL SWIRL
FSSHH
NOW ...
... SHOW ME!!
RUSH

WARP
CHAK
TCH .....
I CAN'T SEE ...!!
!!
GRIND
CLANG
CLANG
GRIND
GRIND

SHOW ME!!
I WANT TO SEE MORE!!
HOW DEEP CAN YOU GO ...?
U-FU .....!!
YES, AMAZING !!
RELYING ON YOUR BLOODLUST ALONE TO EVADE DEADLY BLOWS!!
.....!
GRIND
GRIND
GRIND
GRIND
GRIND
TOO FAST.....!!
AT THIS RATE, SHE'LL .....!
NO..... EVEN KAMIKA-SAN IS .....
IF WE DON'T STOP THIS REAL BODY QUICKLY .....
YEAH ...
..... BUT...

SHE'S SWITCHING PLACES WITH THEM BEFORE I CAN EVEN GIVE A SHOUT.....!!
SURE, I CAN DISTINGUISH BETWEEN THE REAL ONE AND THE FAKES..... BUT...

!
IT'S FINE..... I CAN STILL FIGHT.
I'M GONNA TRY, OURI.
WHAT DO I DO ...!?

SO GUIDE ME.
TELL ME WHERE TO SHOOT .....!!
I'M ALSO..... A CORPSE PRINCESS.

... WHICH-EVER IT IS, THERE SHOULDN'T BE A PROBLEM.
AS LONG AS I DON'T HIT KAMIKA-SAN...

!!
TWITCH
CLANG

OH?
SKID
SKID

MY KATANAS .....!!
TCH ...
SNAP

...SAY, ABOUT YOUR REGRETS .....WELL?
YES ...

?

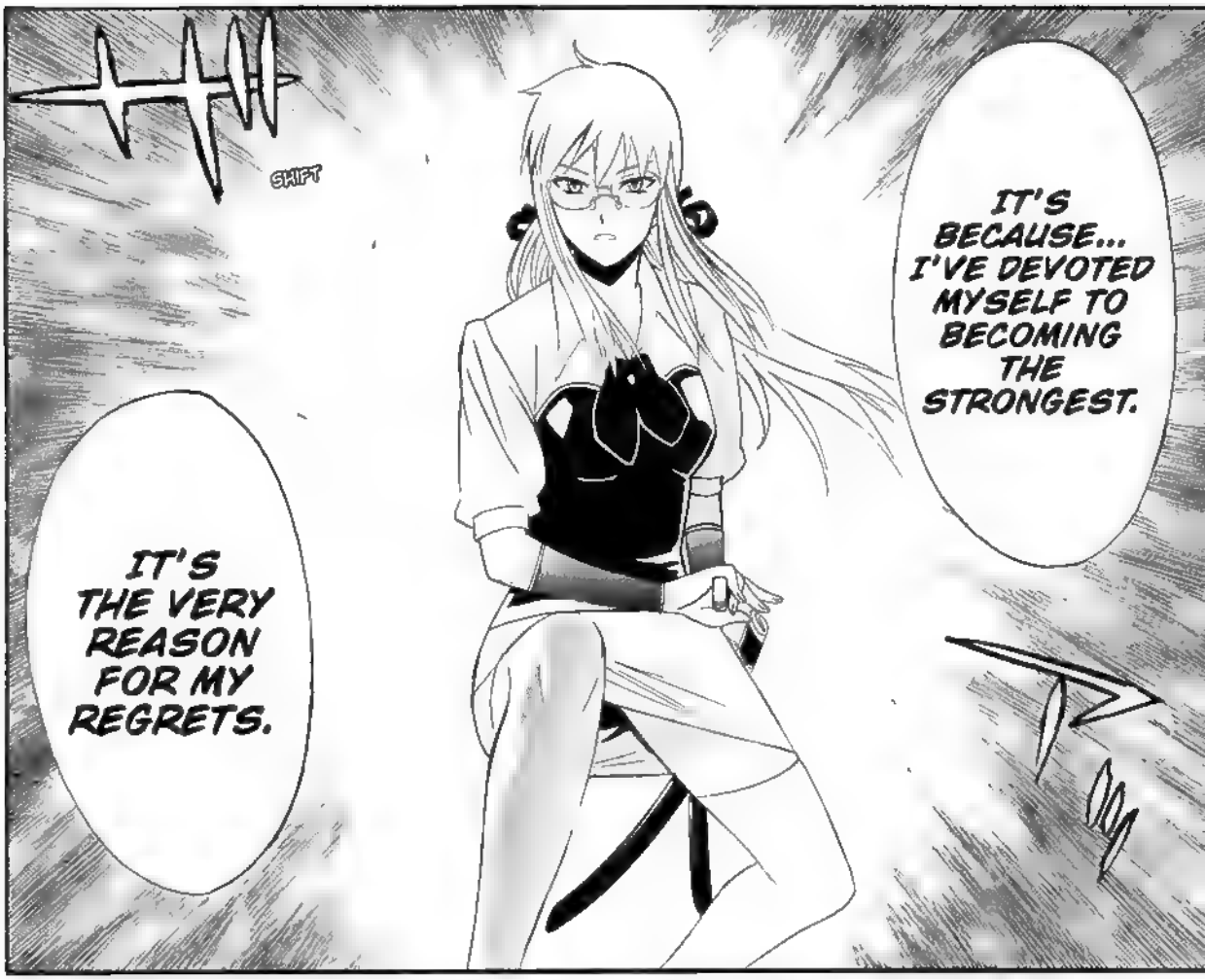
U-FU-FU..... I'M SORRY.
BUT AT THAT DISTANCE, WE CAN'T HAVE A PROPER CONVER-SATION.
I WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOU.
LOOM

ALL OF US UNDEAD POSSESS SPIRITS THAT FAR SURPASS THOSE OF HUMANS.
BUT WHETHER WE CALL THEM "REGRETS" OR "FAITH" ...
...AS OUR ATTACHMENTS GROW STRONGER, SO TOO DOES OUR REASON.

THERE IS SOMETHING INSIDE YOU FIGHTING AGAINST MY FAITH.
SO WHAT FORM DO YOUR REGRETS TAKE?
TELL ME, CORPSE PRINCESS.
I WANT TO KNOW.

THE TITLE "THE STRONGEST"... THAT CROWN YOU BEAR ...
... ISN'T JUST FOR SHOW, IS IT?
.....

CHING
.....NO, KALI.
MY TITLE OF "THE STRONGEST"...
...ISN'T BECAUSE I'M ACTUALLY THE STRONGEST.


SHIFT
IT'S BECAUSE... I'VE DEVOTED MYSELF TO BECOMING THE STRONGEST.
IT'S THE VERY REASON FOR MY REGRETS.

FU.
U-FU-FU-FU-FU.

THAT SEEMS LIKE SUCH A "BOYISH" REGRET TO HAVE ...
IT'S JUST... FU-FU .....
U FU FU.
I'M NOT MOCKING YOUR DETERMI-NATION.
AHH..... NO, NO.
A SWORDSMAN WHO RAN A DOJO IN THE CORNER OF A SMALL TOWN.
.....MY FATHER WAS A SWORDS-MAN.
.....
TO ME, MY FATHER WAS A SYMBOL OF "STRENGTH"... POWER ITSELF.
WE NEED STRENGTH TO PROTECT WHAT MATTERS TO US..... THAT WAS HIS FAVORITE SAYING.....
... HOW-EVER ...

IN THE END..... MY FATHER, WHO PREACHED ABOUT "STRENGTH"... COULDN'T EVEN PROTECT HIS OWN LIFE .....
IT ALL STARTED WITH A MERE ARGUMENT BETWEEN DRUNKS .....
HE DIED... MY FATHER WAS KILLED... NOT BY A SWORDSMAN, BUT BY A PUNK WITH A KNIFE.
CLINK

U-FU-FU... I SEE.
SO THOSE REGRETS OF YOURS .....
...ARE A BLEND OF THE DISAPPOINTMENT AND ADMIRATION YOU FEEL FOR YOUR FATHER... PERHAPS?

.....YOU DON'T GET IT AT ALL.

...UNEX-PECTEDLY ADORABLE .....
CHOMP
YOU'RE... U-FU-FU ...

SLIDE

"I...
...WILL...
...CUT YOU."

LET ME SHOW YOU, KALI.
.....YOU THINK I CAN'T?
TWITCH

...IS BECAUSE I, MYSELF..... AM WORTH-LESS.
"THE STRONGEST"? NO. THE REASON FOR THESE WORTHLESS REGRETS... THE REASON I BECAME A CORPSE PRINCESS...
FOR ME.....THE BUSINESS WITH MY FATHER WAS JUST THE CATALYST .....

...AND HOW WILL SHE DO THAT?
... HMPH.
...THIS WORTH-LESS INDIVIDUAL WILL CUT YOU DOWN..... AND DEFEAT YOU.
AND NOW.....
SO...
...WILL YOUR KATANA BE ABLE TO HIT ITS MARK?
THAT STANCE..... IT TELLS ME YOU'RE PLANNING AN IAI TECHNIQUE, BUT...
I KNOW THAT MY EYES HAVE ALREADY STOLEN AWAY YOUR SENSES.
..... YOU'RE ABOUT TO FIND OUT.
EITHER THAT, OR..... IT'S A BLUFF?
THAT CONFIDENCE..... I CAN ONLY IMAGINE...THAT SHE PLANS TO LAUNCH SOMETHING FROM THE TIP OF HER SWORD.....?
.....

IF SO .....
FSSHH
FLEEING MAY BE THE CORRECT CHOICE HERE .....
I'LL STRENGTHEN MY GUARD AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE MOMENT .....
FU-FU... VERY WELL, CORPSE PRINCESS.
WHILE I HAVE THE CHANCE... I'LL SURROUND HER WITH MUMMIES .....
NOW I CAN HANDLE WHATEVER SHE MAY TRY.....!!
FSSHH
STEP
TMP
SHOW ME YOUR ANSWER.
FOOM
NOW..... SHOW ME!!

DUCK
SWISH
SLAP
SWISH
TMP
TMP
!!
LEAP
STEP
TMP
STEP
STEP
WHAT'S THIS...?
.....?
WHY.....? SHE HAS NO TRICK? NO STRATEGY?
STEP
THUNK
SKID
THUNK
SKID
THUNK
SKID
THUNK
SKID
SKID

STEP
WHAT...? WHAT IS SHE AFTER?
WHAT SORT OF .....?
SWISH
YET..... IT DOESN'T FEEL AS THOUGH SHE'S FLEEING .....
FWOOM
IS IT .....?
BUT WHAT .....?
SHE'S WAITING FOR SOMETHING?
.....! SHE'S .....
BOOM

GRAZE
THIS MOMENT !!

TMP
TMP
TMP
!?

KACHAK
I WAS WAITING FOR THIS MOMENT ...
THIS MOMENT, THIS POSITION !!
WHEN YOUR CURSE WOULD GO ASTRAY .....
...AND THE CONDITIONS WOULD BE PERFECT FOR MY CURSE TO HIT YOU.

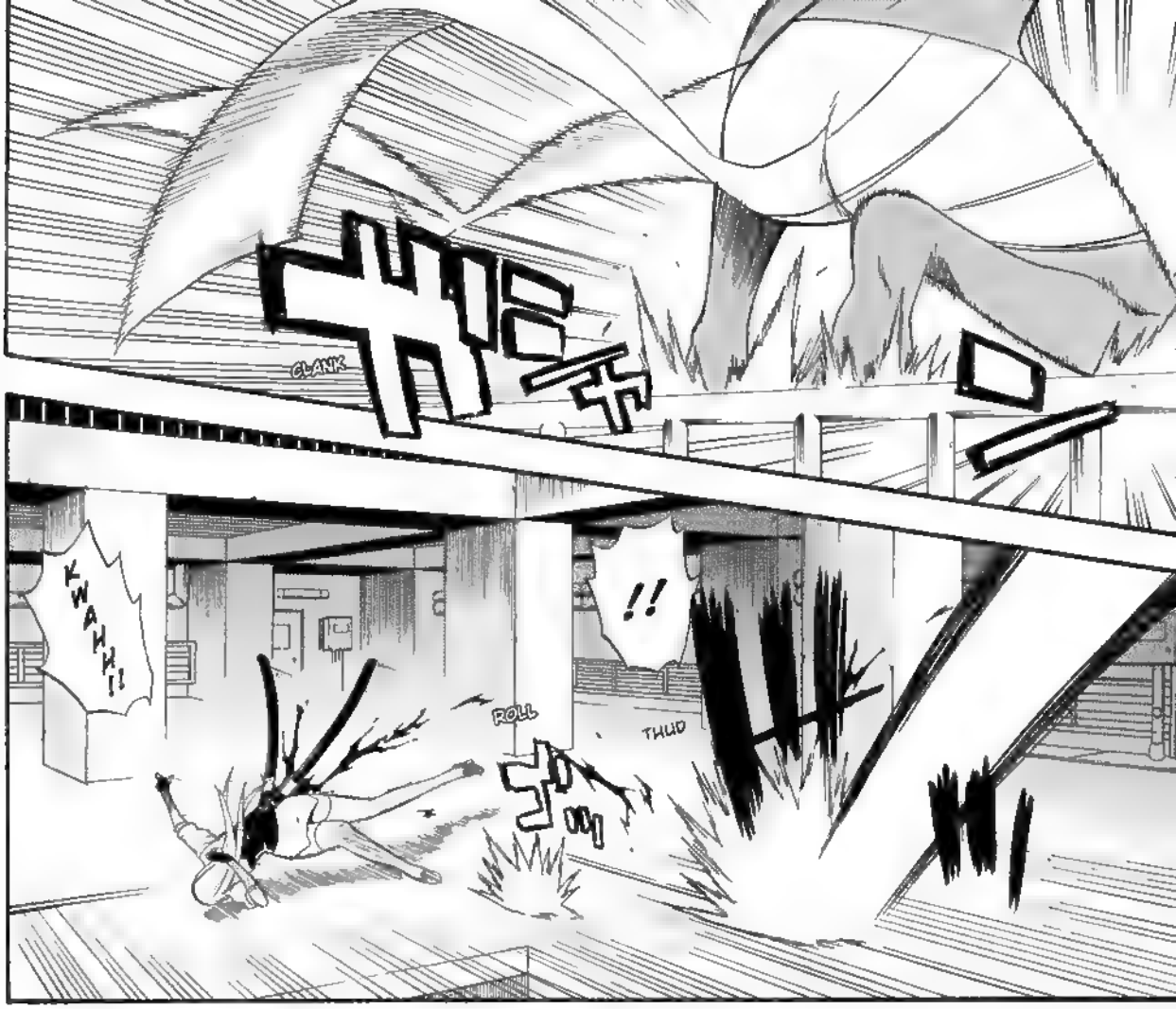
SHE'S BEEN WAITING .....?
COULD IT BE.....?
.....!
SHE KEPT DODGING MY ATTACKS DURING OUR TALK OF REGRETS TOO.....
ALL SO THAT MY TRUE BODY WOULD BE SHOT.....!?

BUT...I'VE NOTHING TO FEAR!! I'LL SIMPLY DODGE AND.....
HER CURSE...!! YES, I KNEW IT WOULD LAUNCH FROM HER SWORD.....
TURN

!?
SHUDDER
SHING

NO, I'M WRONG!!
THIS IS DANGEROUS !!
AHHHHH!
TMP
...TO UNSHEATHE THAT SWORD...!!
IF I ALLOW HER...
FOOM

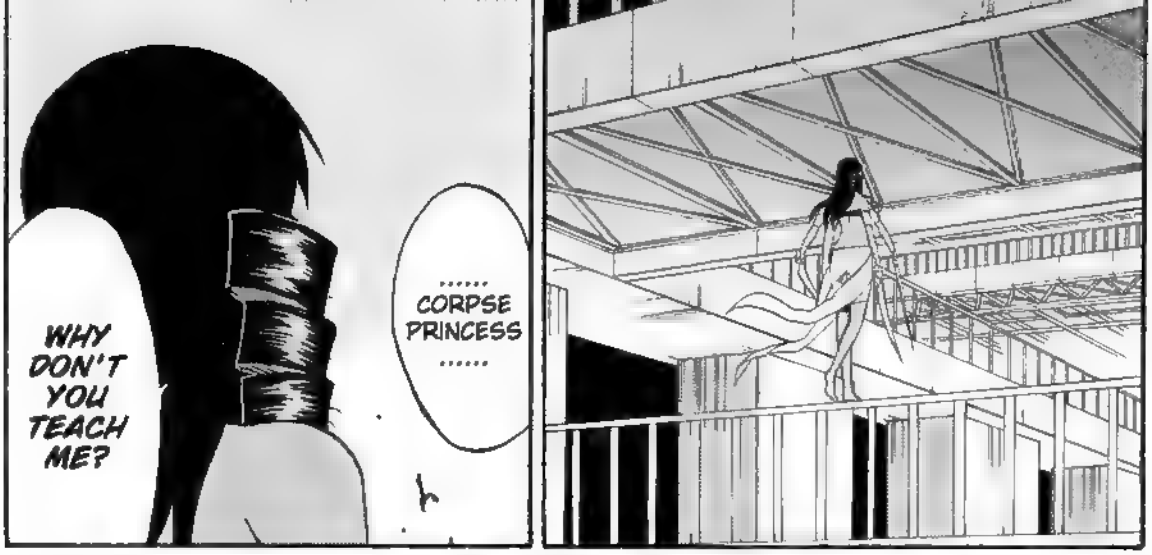
FOOM
SLASH

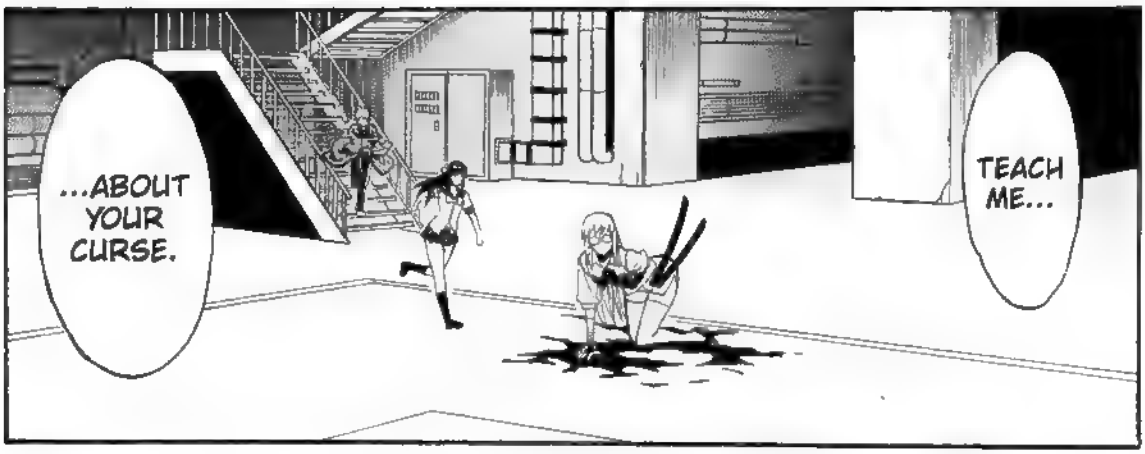

CLANK
KWAHK!
!!
ROLL
THUD

HAA
.....
HAA
...

DASH
KA—
KA-
MIKA-
SAN
!!

TURN
.....
ARGH
.....

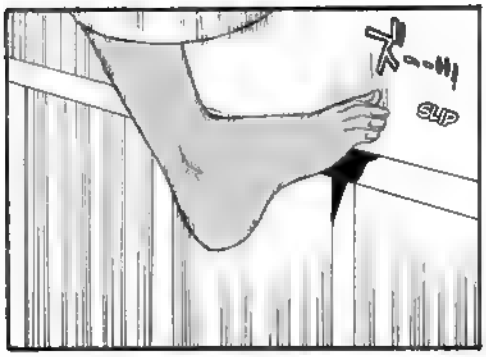

WHY DON'T YOU TEACH ME?
.....
CORPSE PRINCESS
.....

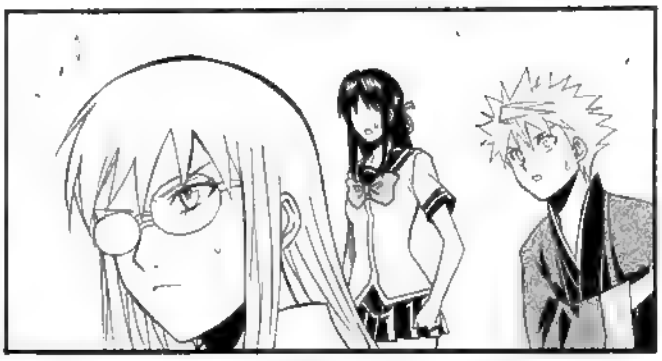

...ABOUT YOUR CURSE.
TEACH ME...

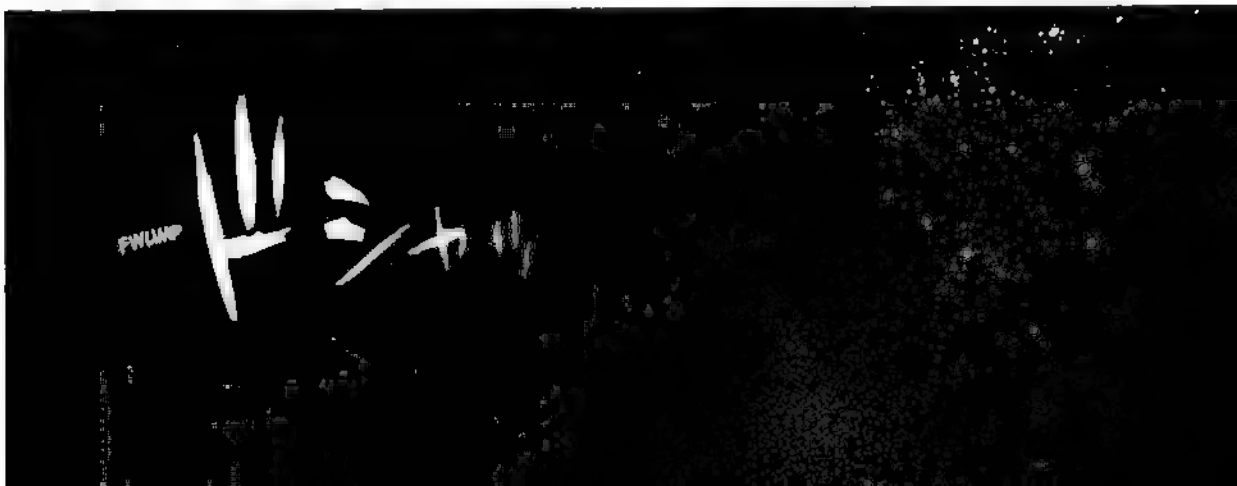
EVEN IF ALL I HAVE TO USE IS A CHIPPED OR BROKEN BLADE...IT WILL STILL CUT.
EVEN..... IF MY EYES ARE SHUT...
.....
IT WILL ALWAYS CLEAVE MY OPPONENTS IN TWO.

GRIN
U FU FU.
SLIDE
WORTHLESS THOUGH I AM, THAT IS THE CURSE I POSSESS.
ALL FROM MY DESIRE TO WIELD THE STRONGEST SWORD. AN ILLUSION MADE REAL BY MY EARNEST TENACITY.

WON-
DERFUL
...!
FSSHH
FWUMP


SLIP




FWUMP

U-FU-FU-FU-FU-FU-FU.
FU FU ...
DEATH 43: BEQUEST OF THE DEAD
A CURSE THAT NEVER FAILS TO CLEAVE OPPONENTS IN TWO.
FWUMP
NO
HOW VERY..... FU-FU .....
SLIP
...WON-DERFUL ...!

OURI

DEATH 43: BEQUEST OF THE DEAD

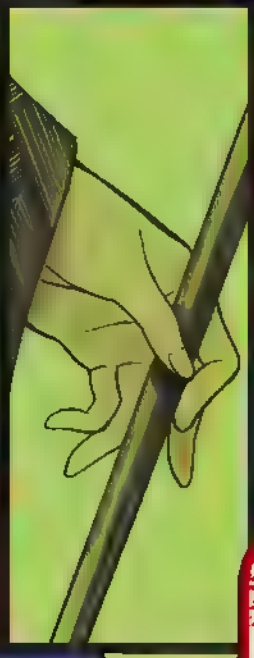
MAKINA

Shikabane

Hime

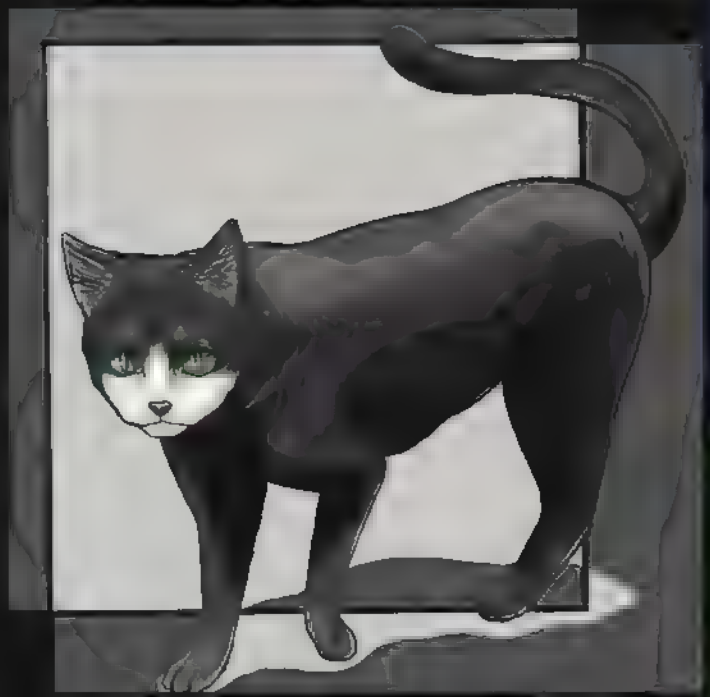
CORPSE PRINCESS

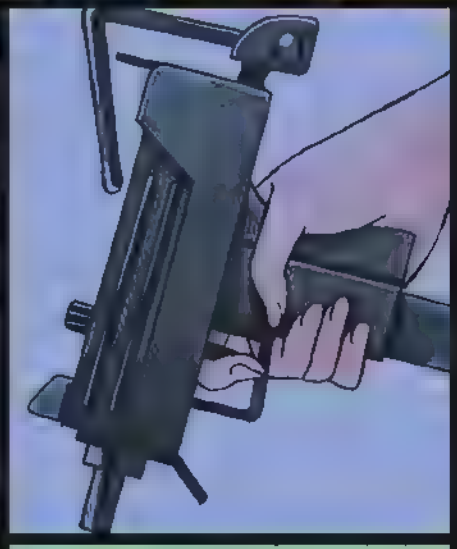
MAKINA

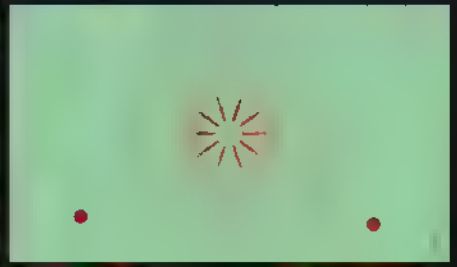


CORPSE PRINCESS

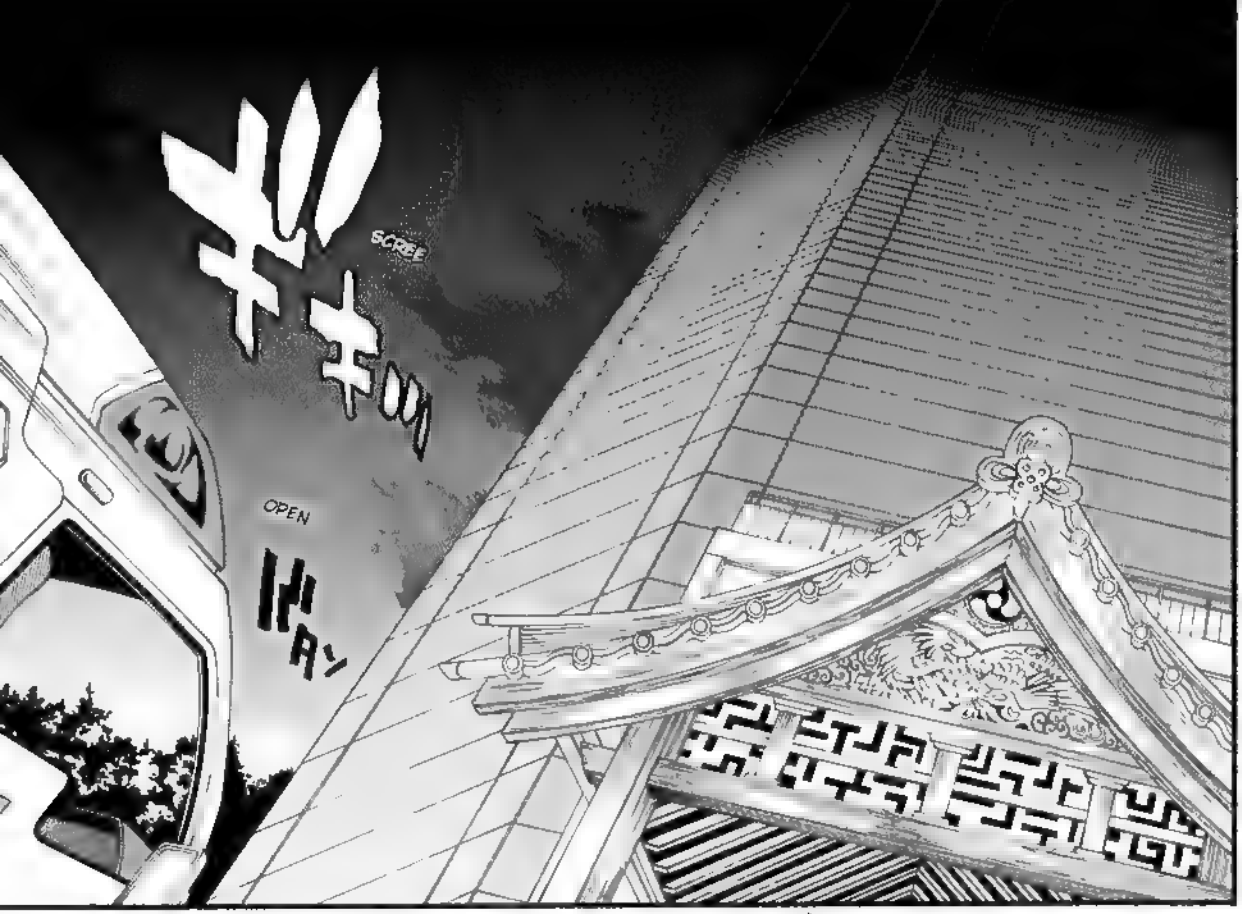
DEATH 43: BEQUEST OF THE DEAD







CORPSE PRINCESS 10


SCREE
OPEN

HURRY !!
THERE ARE MORE WOUNDED INSIDE!!
RUSH

THIS IS..... THE POWER OF THEIR "FOUNDERS," I SUPPOSE .....
JUST ONE INCIDENT..... JUST A SINGLE SHIKABANE MANAGED TO INVADE, AND.....
..... TERRI-FYING.

TAKA-MINE-SAMA.
WE'VE COMPLETED THE PERSONNEL CHECK OF THE HEAD TEMPLE.
OH ...?
MANY ARE WOUNDED, BUT MIRACULOUSLY, WE HAVE FEW FATALITIES.
I SEE..... HAVING OUR FORCES GATHERED HERE IS WHAT SAVED US.

YES..... THAT MAY BE SO, BUT IT'S ONLY A SMALL REPRIEVE..... GIVEN THE DIRE STATE OF THINGS...
YOU'RE RIGHT.
.....
..... TAKA-MINE-SAMA?

AT THIS POINT .....IT'S UNAVOIDABLE .....
...NO.....
CREAK
MILAM'S ACTIONS..... SEEMED TO POINT TO ANOTHER MOTIVE.....
.....IS THIS..... REALLY IT?
... IT'S NOTH-ING.

!
OPEN

NO..... PLEASE, SIT.
GOOD WORK TONIGHT.

AH ...

TAKA-MINE-SAMA.
STAND

NO .....
THANKING US.....? BUT THAT SHIKA-BANE.....
STAND

IT'S THANKS TO YOU THREE THAT DAMAGE WAS KEPT TO A MINIMUM.
I THANK YOU FOR IT.

KALI..... THE FOUNDER, MILAM...
...WAS DEFINITELY A SHIKABANE TO BE FEARED.

TO FOOL US...THE ENTIRE HEAD TEMPLE, WITH THOSE CORPOREAL ILLUSIONS .....
AND THEN, IN DIRECT COMBAT, SHE MANIPULATED THE AWARENESS OF ALL WHO SAW HER SENSE-STEALING EYES.....
WHO COULD HAVE FORESEEN A SHIKABANE WITH SUCH A POWERFUL CURSE?

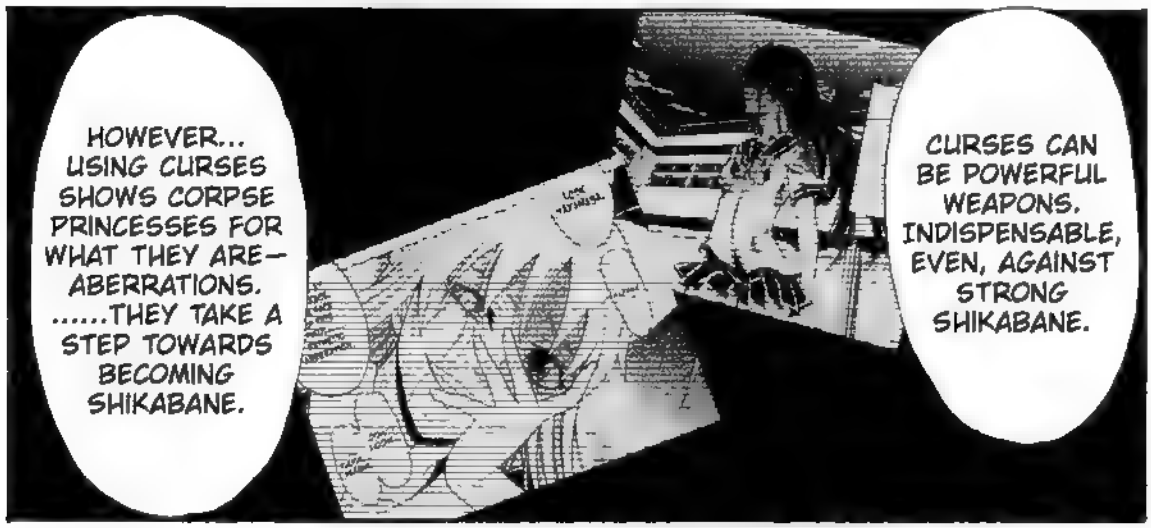
I CAN'T BELIEVE THERE ARE ENEMIES THAT STRONG OUTSIDE OF THE SEVEN STARS.....
.....I'M STILL NOT NEARLY STRONG ENOUGH .....!!
IN THE END..... WE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING ...
IF KAMIKA-SAN HADN'T COME TO SAVE US, WE'D HAVE BEEN KILLED ...

I WAS ONLY ABLE TO BEAT HER...
... BECAUSE YOU DISCOVERED HER REAL BODY, OURI-KUN. THAT WAS A GREAT HELP.
THAT'S NOT TRUE.
I'M SORRY... TAKAMINE-SAMA.
THAT SAID .....
OH .....
THANK... YOU.
I DISOBEYED YOUR ORDER .....
I USED ...
...MY CURSE.
WITHOUT YOUR CURSE, SHE WOULDN'T HAVE GONE DOWN.
..... IT HAD TO BE DONE.

...!
TURN

IT'S NECES-SARY.
..... YOU FIND THAT HARSH, OURI?

!?
YES.
BUT RULES ARE RULES. YOU'LL ENTER THE PURIFICATION CHAMBER.


HOWEVER... USING CURSES SHOWS CORPSE PRINCESSES FOR WHAT THEY ARE— ABERRATIONS. .....THEY TAKE A STEP TOWARDS BECOMING SHIKABANE.
CURSES CAN BE POWERFUL WEAPONS. INDISPENSABLE, EVEN, AGAINST STRONG SHIKABANE.

CONTRACTING MONKS TO CORPSE PRINCESSES WITH CURSES MUST BE ESPECIALLY AUSTERE IN THEIR DISCIPLINE.
AND THAT'S WHY...

....."ABERRATIONS."

ALL SO THAT.....
... THEY CAN REMAIN HUMAN AS LONG AS POSSIBLE.

I FEAR OUR NEXT BATTLE IS CLOSE AT HAND.
DON'T WORRY THOUGH..... SHE'LL BE BACK IN TWO TO THREE DAYS.
SHIRAE.
.....
RIGHT .....
CLENCH

..... WHAT'S THIS?
GIVE THAT TO OURI.
YES.
YES?

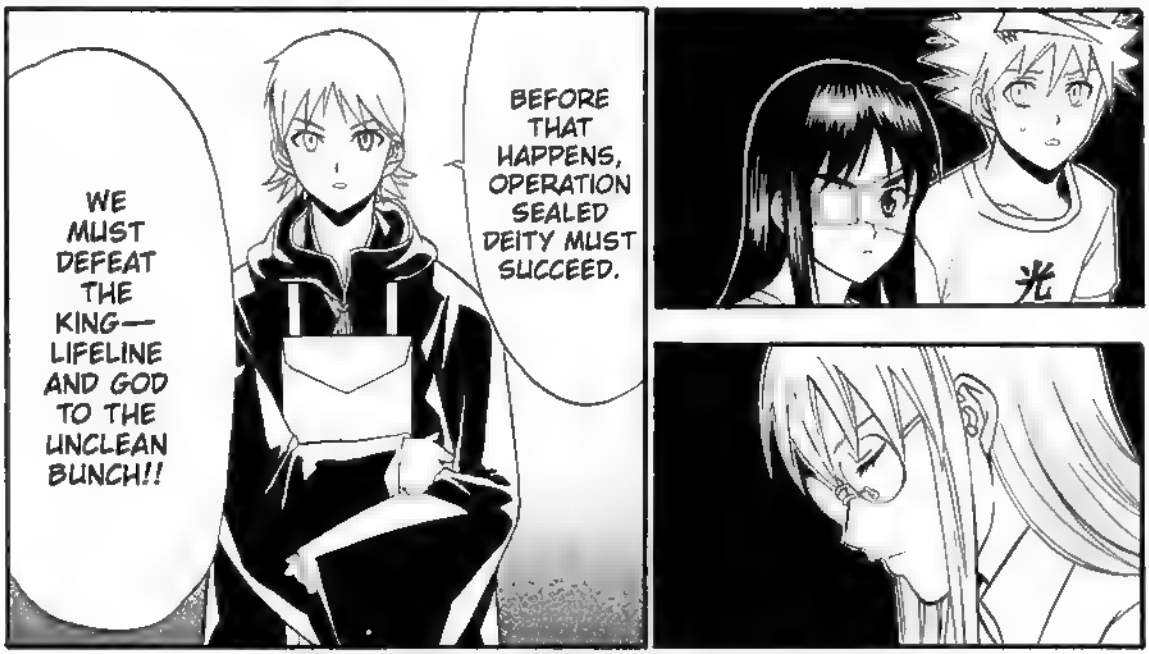
!!
FOR YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN OPERATION SEALED DEITY...
AP-PROVAL.

TO BE BLUNT..... WE NEED TO GET THIS OPERATION OFF THE GROUND AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE..... WE'RE IN QUITE A PANIC, ACTUALLY.
YES.
YOUR ACHIEVE-MENTS IN THIS LAST BATTLE HAVE BEEN RECOG-NIZED..... FURTHER-MORE...

S-SERI-OUSLY ?
OPERATION SEALED DEITY!!

THERE WERE FIVE SUTRAS IN TOTAL.....WHICH MEANS THAT AT WORST, WE COULD BE LOOKING AT FOUR MORE SHIKABANE OF THAT CLASS WITHIN THE UNCLEAN BUNCH.
THAT FOUNDER YOU FOUGHT WAS A SHIKABANE BROUGHT INTO THEIR GROUP TO USE ONE OF THE KING'S SUTRAS.....
MOST IMPOR-TANTLY .....

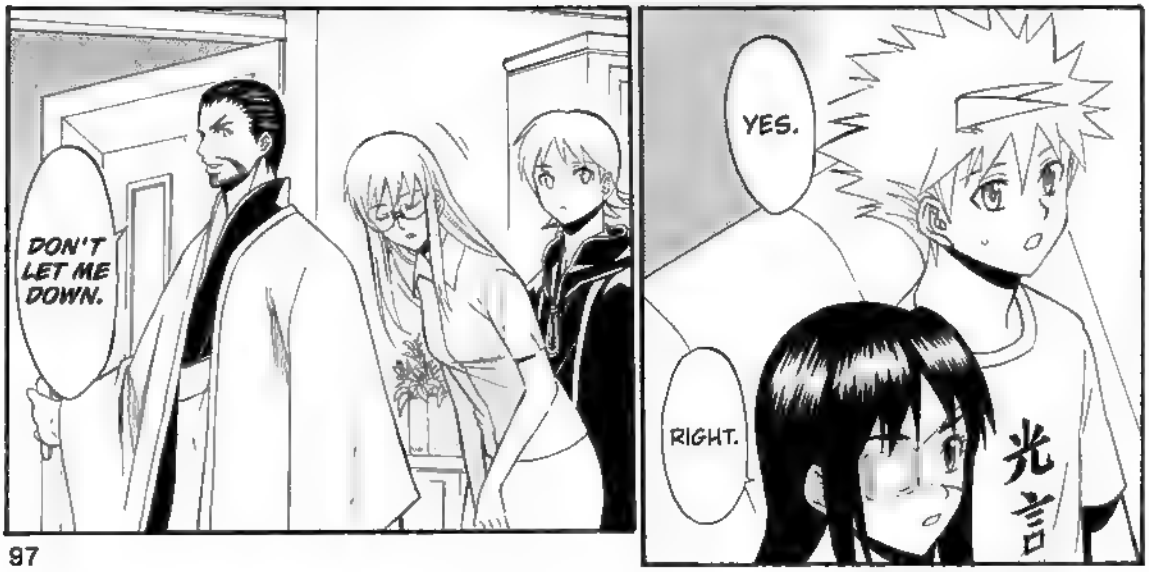
IF.....THE KING AND THE OTHER FOUR FOUNDERS WERE TO ATTACK US NOW.....
NO DOUBT— THE HEAD TEMPLE WOULD FALL TO THEM.


BEFORE THAT HAPPENS, OPERATION SEALED DEITY MUST SUCCEED.
WE MUST DEFEAT THE KING— LIFELINE AND GOD TO THE UNCLEAN BUNCH!!
光

THERE'S A POSSIBILITY..... THAT THE WEAKER SHIKABANE, UNIFIED UNDER HIM, WILL DIE OFF NATURALLY.
...THE UNCLEAN BUNCH WILL LOSE THEIR GOAL AND WEAKEN ...
WITH THEIR LEADER GONE ...
UHH... RIGHT .....
...JUST KEEP EVERY-THING I SAID IN MIND.
OURI..... I WON'T SAY ANYTHING CONCERNING YOUR OUTBURST ABOUT WANTING TO PARTICIPATE, BUT.....
STARE
AS OF NOW, OPERATION SEALED DEITY CANNOT AFFORD THE SLIGHTEST DELAY OR BLUNDER.
THIS ULTIMATE STRATEGY REPRESENTS OUR ONLY HOPE TO TURN THE TABLES.
HEY, OURI!! WHAT'RE YOU SMILING ABOUT!?
WELL...
N-NO, IT'S JUST THAT I'M THE BUREAU CHIEF, AND .....
WHAT !?
NO MATTER HOW CONCERNED YOU ARE FOR OURI'S SAFETY.
SHIRAE..... WE CANNOT HAVE YOU TORMENTING HIM RIGHT BEFORE THE OPERATION.

NOTHING .....I'M JUST GLAD THAT I CAN THINK OF YOU AS A FRIEND, SHIRAE-SAN. IF ONLY A LITTLE .....
DON'T WORRY... I'LL DO MY BEST.
.....HMPH.
AS LONG AS YOU UNDER-STAND.

YOU SHOULD RECEIVE A DETAILED REPORT ABOUT THE MISSION AND THIS RECENT INCIDENT WITHIN TWO OR THREE DAYS.
IN THE MEANTIME, YOU TWO OUGHT TO MAKE ANY NECESSARY PREPARATIONS.
STAND
STAND


YES.
RIGHT.
DON'T LET ME DOWN.

THAT'S GOOD... SURE, THEY FELT THEY HAD TO WARN US, BUT... WE GET TO JOIN IN ANYWAY.
.....
.....
PHEW.
パタ
CLOSE

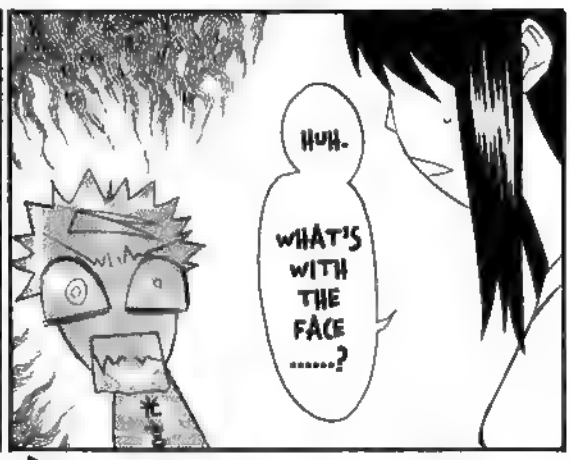
OURI.
.....
HEY.

EH?
OH..... YEAH. I'M FINE. WHY?
IS YOUR BODY..... OKAY?

THINKING ABOUT IT AGAIN, I REALIZED THAT I'M RELYING ON YOU IN A LOT OF WAYS, OURI.
AND I KNOW..... WE ALREADY TALKED ABOUT MY CURSE... AND WE DECIDED, BUT.....
I KNOW MY OWN PUTS A REAL STRAIN ON YOU, OURI. .....AND ON ME.
..... TAKAMINE-SAMA'S TALK ABOUT CURSES .....

SO, SORRY ...
AND..... THANKS.

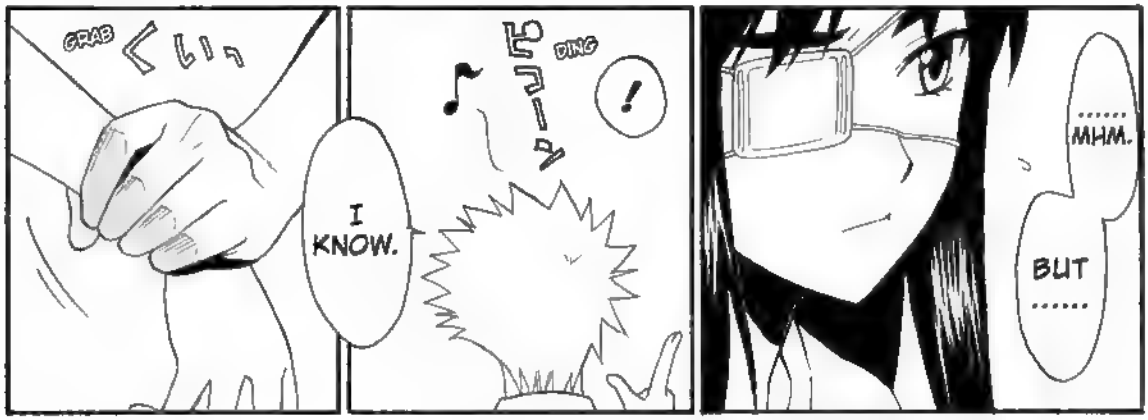
.....I MEAN.....WITH THE WAY YOU SAID THAT SO SUDDENLY, I GOT SCARED INSTEAD, FOR SOME REASON... WHAT A WEIRD FEELING.....
TWITCH
TWITCH
NO..... I.....
I JUST THOUGHT... YOU WERE GONNA GET MAD AT ME AGAIN .....


HUH.
WHAT'S WITH THE FACE .....?

..... CLEARLY, I HAD GOOD REASON TO...
... SORRY.
HOW RUDE!
WOW!! IS THAT HOW YOU SEE ME!?

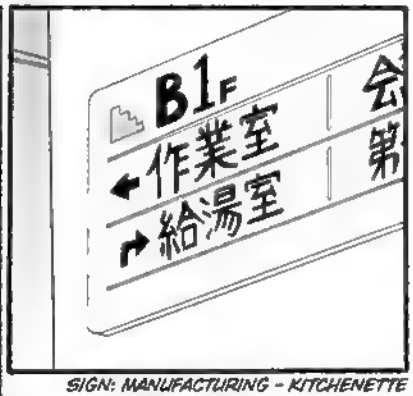
KIN!
POW
BUHH !!
OUT OF NOWHERE!!

THERE'S A PART OF ME THAT'S GLAD YOU HAVE IT.
BUT, WELL..... YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THE WHOLE CURSE THING, HOSHIMURA-SAN.


GRAB
I KNOW.
DING
!
..... MHM.
BUT .....

IT'LL BE REASSURING TO HAVE YOU WITH ME.
HELP ME OUT.

HUH .....?
?

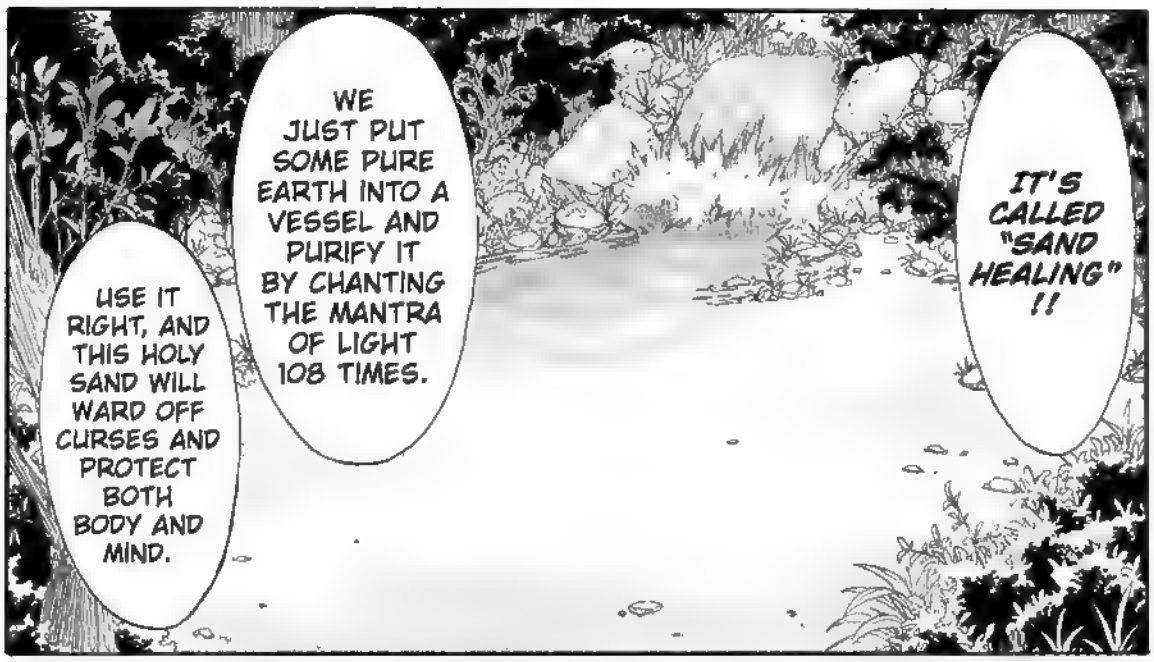


SIGN: MANUFACTURING - KITCHENETTE

.....YOU WANNA PLAY IN A SANDBOX?
WHAT? NO!!
DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA!!

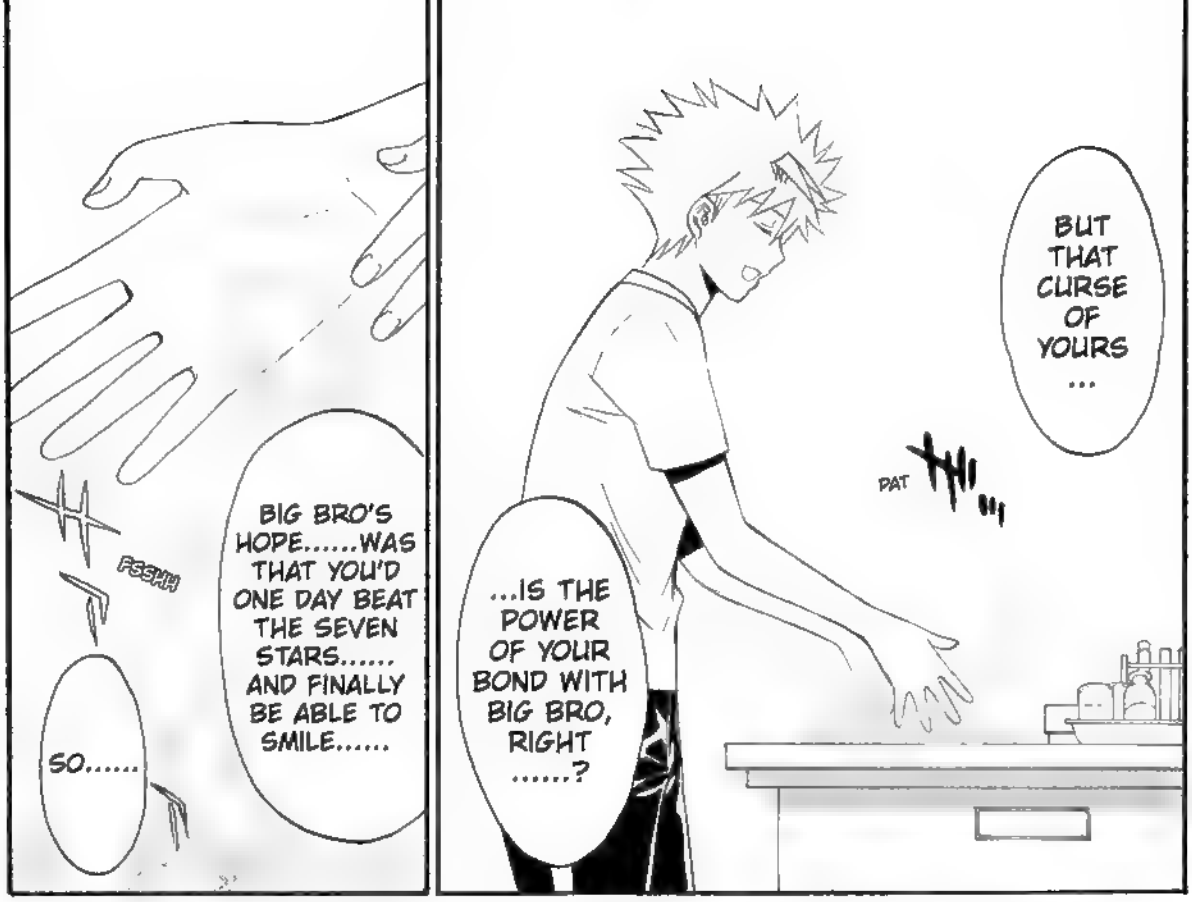
MAKING SAND...OF COURSE.
WE'RE GONNA MAKE A TON OF SAND!!

I LEARNED THIS FROM RIKA-SAN!!
SPILL
THIS ISN'T FOR PLAYING IN.

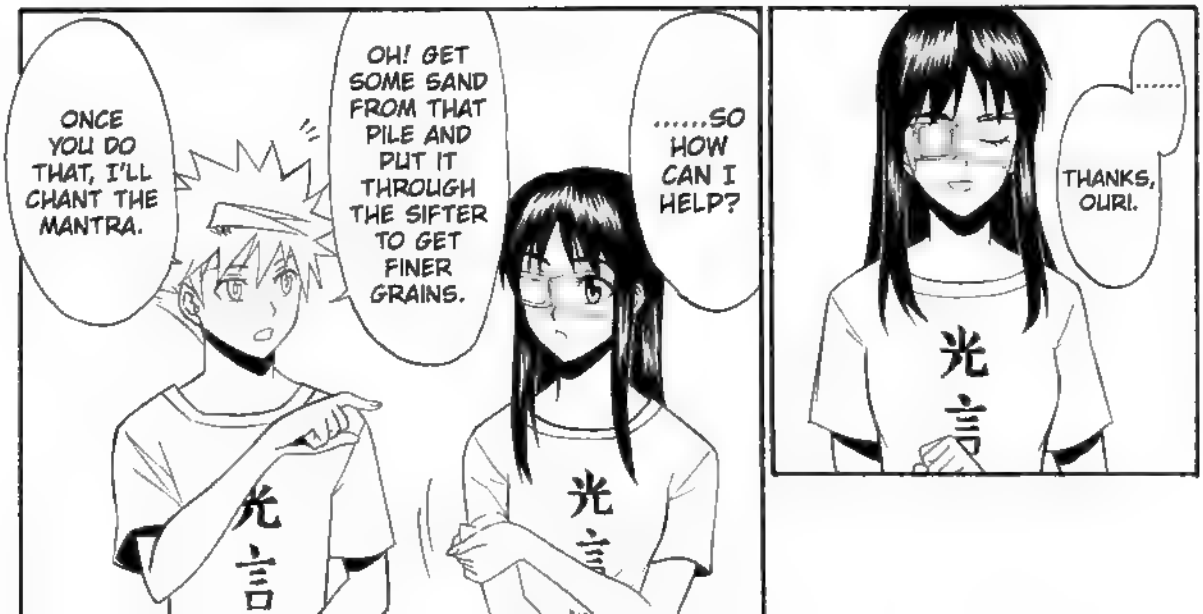

WE JUST PUT SOME PURE EARTH INTO A VESSEL AND PURIFY IT BY CHANTING THE MANTRA OF LIGHT 108 TIMES.
IT'S CALLED "SAND HEALING" !!
USE IT RIGHT, AND THIS HOLY SAND WILL WARD OFF CURSES AND PROTECT BOTH BODY AND MIND.

.....LIKE I WAS SAYING EARLIER ...
...I THINK YOUR CURSE IS A VALUABLE THING, HOSHIMURA-SAN.

!


BIG BRO'S HOPE.....WAS THAT YOU'D ONE DAY BEAT THE SEVEN STARS..... AND FINALLY BE ABLE TO SMILE.....
FSSH!!
SO.....
...IS THE POWER OF YOUR BOND WITH BIG BRO, RIGHT .....?
PAT
BUT THAT CURSE OF YOURS ...

THAT'S MY JOB HERE.
WE OUGHTA GET YOU TO A POINT WHERE YOU CAN FIGHT JUST FINE, EVEN WITH YOUR CURSE.


ONCE YOU DO THAT, I'LL CHANT THE MANTRA.
OH! GET SOME SAND FROM THAT PILE AND PUT IT THROUGH THE SIFTER TO GET FINER GRAINS.
.....SO HOW CAN I HELP?
THANKS, OURI.
.....
光言
光言
光言

I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH WE CAN MAKE BEFORE OPERATION SEALED DEITY, BUT...
PAT
PAT
PAT
WITH ENOUGH TO DISPERSE KNOCKBACK FROM YOUR CURSE...
...YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO USE IT FOR A WHILE WITHOUT LOSING YOURSELF .....

ALL I KNOW ARE THE TWO MANTRAS..... WHICH LEAVES ME HERE, PLAYING WITH SAND.....
GLOOM
...AND HONESTLY, IT FEELS LIKE THIS IS JUST ABOUT ALL I CAN DO..... GIVEN THAT I CAN'T USE RITUAL TOOLS.....
GLOOM
GLOOM
GLOOM

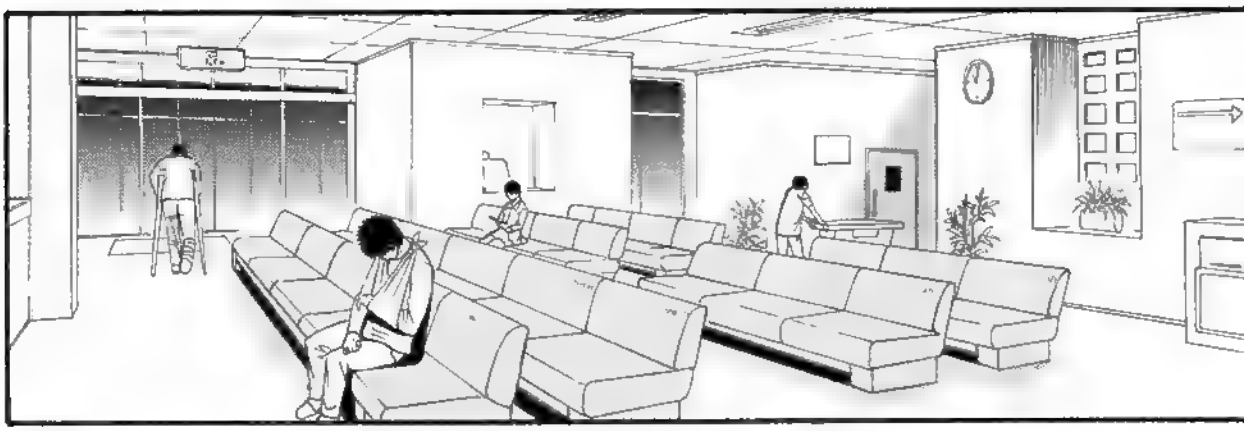
SO I WANTED TO MAKE AS MUCH OF THIS AS POSSIBLE .....
WHEN WE CONFRONTED THE SEVEN STARS, I REALIZED HOW ESSENTIAL YOUR CURSE'S POWER WOULD BE.
PAT
PAT

I TRUST YOUR JUDGMENT, OURI.
I'M SURE THIS SAND'LL COME IN HANDY.

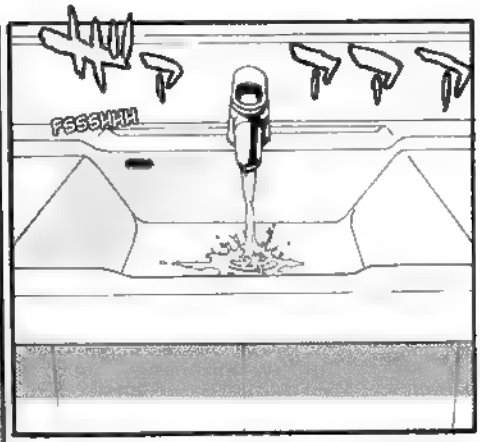
..... IT'S FINE.
LIFT

YOU'RE MY CONTRACTING MONK, AFTER ALL.
AND MY FRIEND.
HEH HEH HEH.
HEH HEH.
FRIEND.....
HEH.
.....
WH—
WHAT?
ALL OF A SUDDEN...
SOLT
ぴくっ!
FU-FU-FU-FU-FU-FU-FU-FU.
FU FU FU FU.
U-FU-FU-FU-FU.
♪
NO, NO, NO. I'M ALL FIRED UP NOW, ACTUALLY.
ARE YOU PERHAPS..... EXPERIENCING BATTLE FATIGUE?
..... YOU OKAY?
U-FU-FU-FU-FU-FU-FU-FU-FU.
♪
NAH..... SORRY. I'M JUST HAPPY.

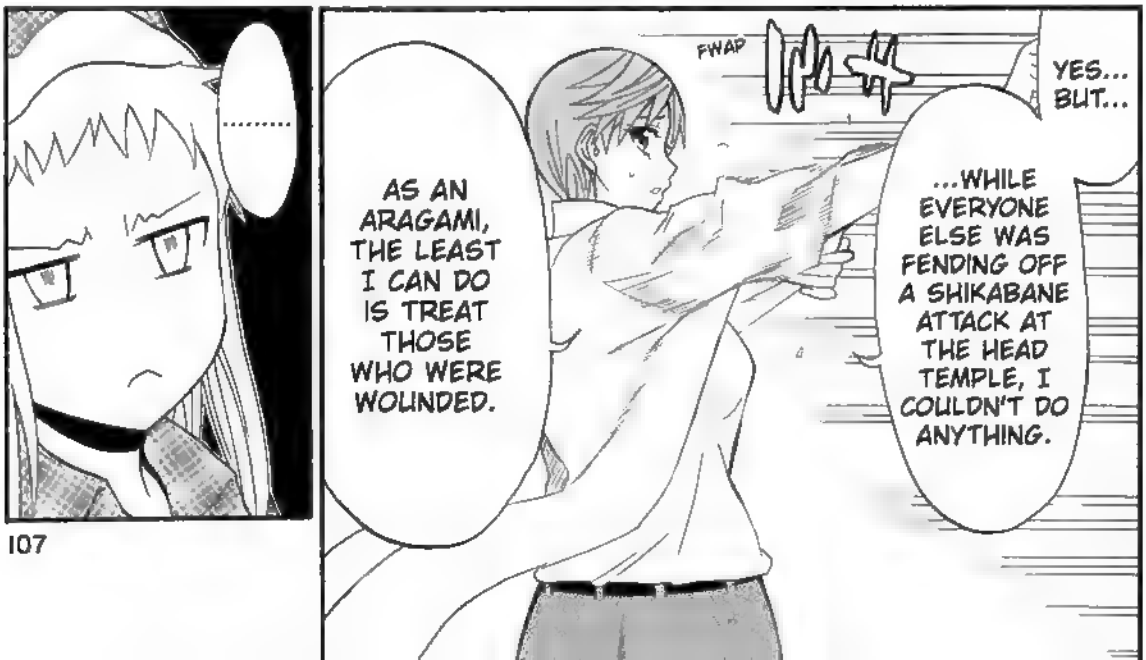
YAMA
GENERAL
HOSPITAL
山磨総合病院

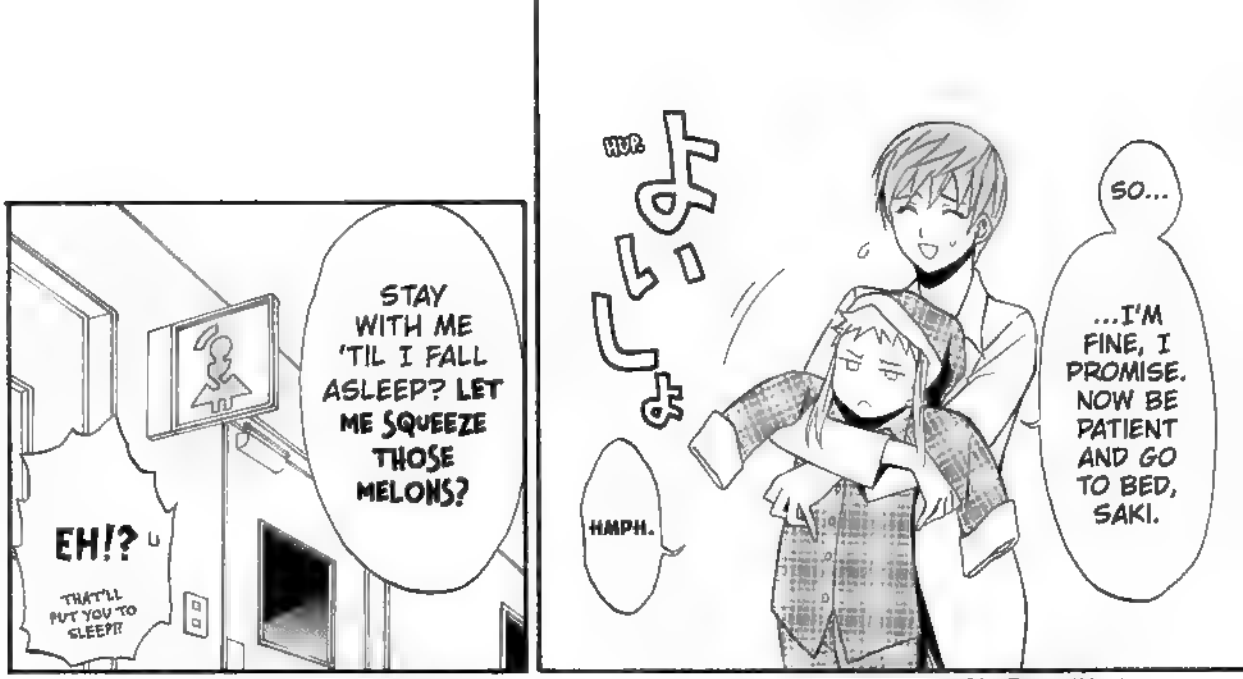


SPLASH

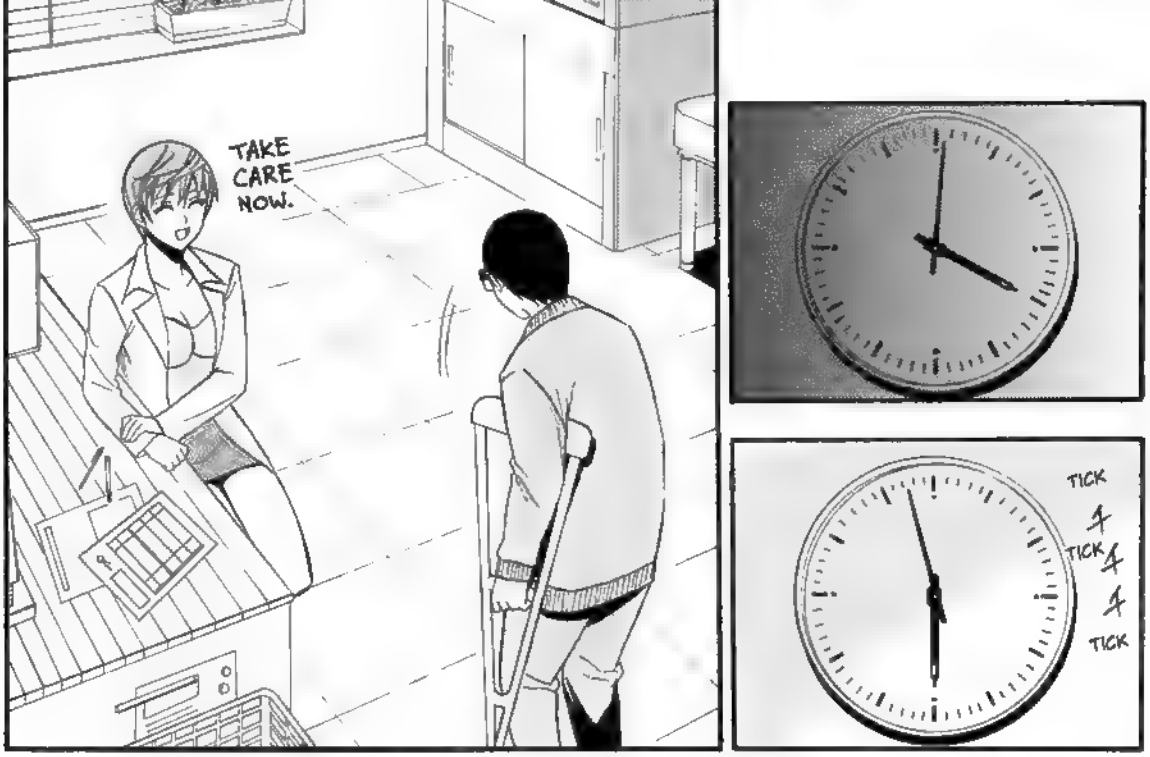

FSSSHHH

RIKA.
YOU OKAY?
.....
SIGH.
← RIKA'S
.....BUT WITH ALL THOSE PATIENTS YESTERDAY, YOU BARELY GOT AN HOUR OF SLEEP.
AH. YEAH.
I'M FINE, SAKI.


.....
FWAP
AS AN ARAGAMI, THE LEAST I CAN DO IS TREAT THOSE WHO WERE WOUNDED.
YES... BUT...
...WHILE EVERYONE ELSE WAS FENDING OFF A SHIKABANE ATTACK AT THE HEAD TEMPLE, I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING.


HUH
SO...
...I'M FINE, I PROMISE. NOW BE PATIENT AND GO TO BED, SAKI.
HMPH.
STAY WITH ME 'TIL I FALL ASLEEP? LET ME SQUEEZE THOSE MELONS?
EH!?
THAT'LL PUT YOU TO SLEEP!!

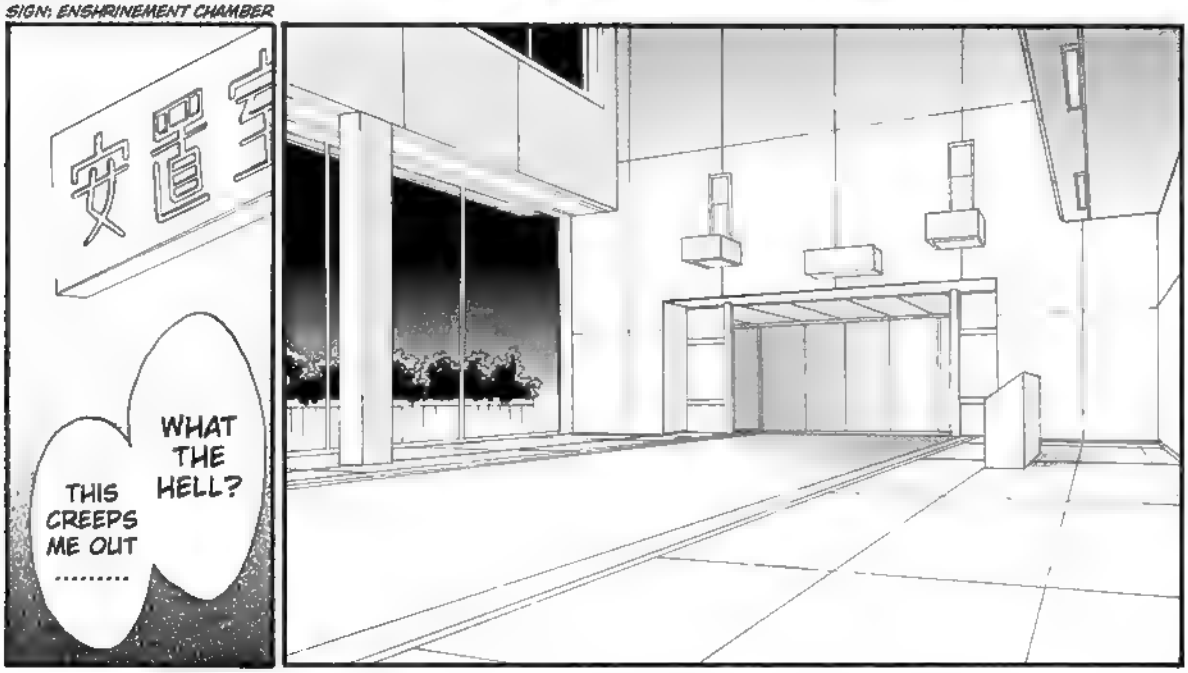
MY PATIENT, THAT IS.


TAKE CARE NOW.
TICK
TICK
TICK

OKAY.
HANG IN THERE. THIS NEXT PATIENT'S THE LAST ONE.
PHEW .....

WELL..... ACTUALLY .....
HOW CAN I HELP YOU?
HI THERE. TAKE A SEAT.
CREAK
OPEN
STEP
STEP

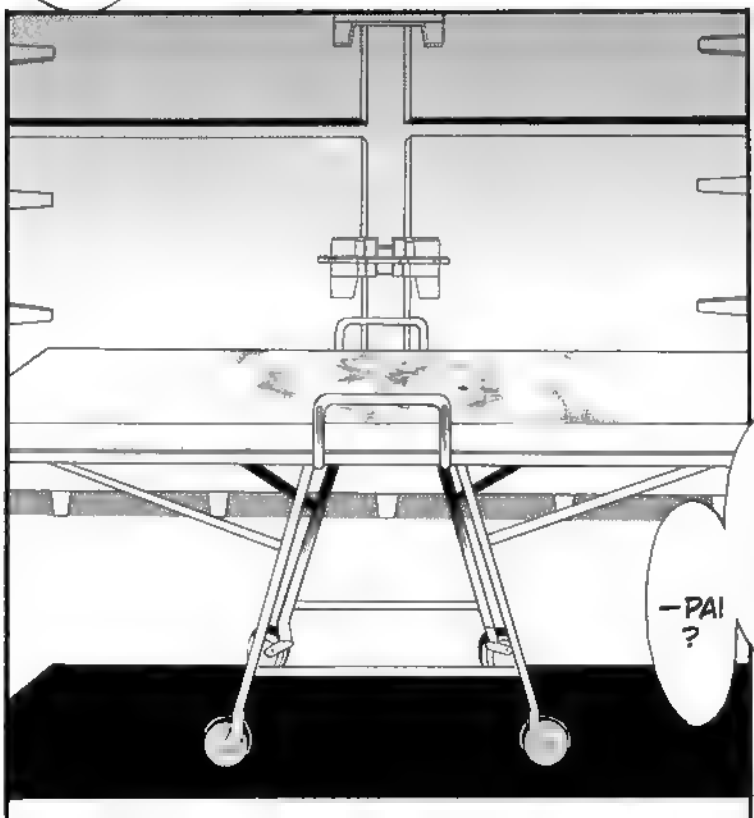
THERE'S SOMETHING .....
...I NEED YOUR COOPERATION FOR, YOUNG MISS.
CRACK
GLATTER
!!
FOOM
THUD

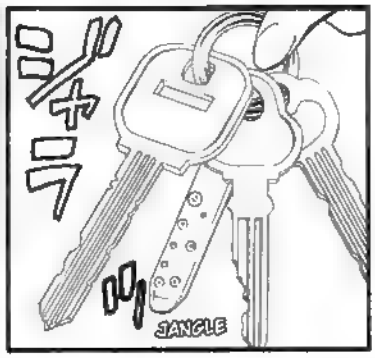

SIGN: ENSHRINEMENT CHAMBER
安置室
WHAT THE HELL?
THIS CREEPS ME OUT .....

THIS SHIKABANE... I HEARD IT'S THE ONE WHO JUST CAUSED ALL THAT TROUBLE.
..... WE'VE NO CHOICE, SENPAI.
THEY HAVE TO DO A BUNCH OF RESEARCH ON HER.
AND THIS ONE'S A SHIKABANE, EVEN.
HOW'S IT AN INVESTIGATOR'S JOB TO CART AROUND BODIES!?

UHH..... NAMU NAMU, GO ON IN PEACE.
FOR SOME REASON, CORPSES OF CUTE GIRLS ARE ALWAYS THE CREEPIEST.

HUH? IT'S NOT THERE? MAYBE IN THE NEXT ROOM?
TWITCH
? WHICH ONE?
WE'RE PUTTING HER ON ICE, SO GO GET THE KEY.




JANGLE

FOUND IT.
IT'S THIS ONE, RIGHT SEN—
—PAI ?
OPEN

.....
EH .....?

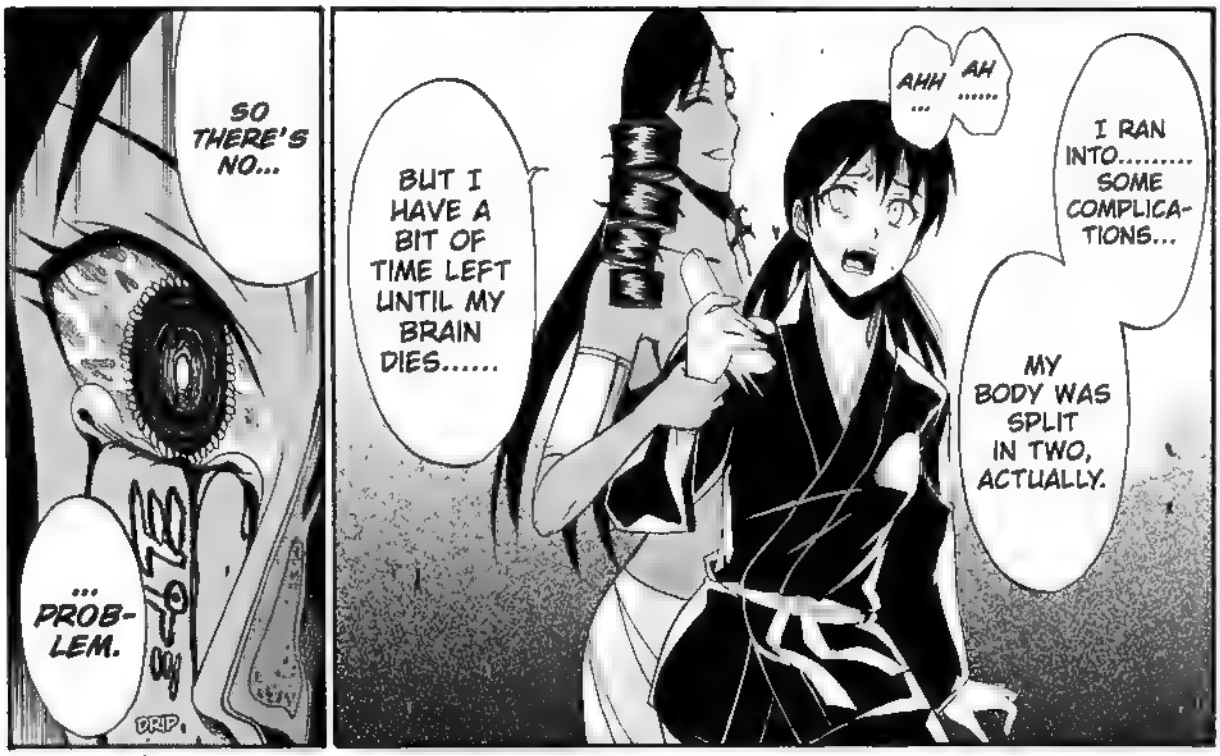
JOLT
RING
Hi
!!
BUT HOW.....?

THE BODY ON THE TABLE..... TOO.....
HE'S GONE!?

WHEN DID I..... MAKE A CALL.....?
...EH..... WHEN...!?
RING
RING
CALLING

Hello ?
.....
CLICK
TO WHOM!? AND HOW .....!?
!? IT CONNECTED !!
Well? How's it going?
.....
Ahh..... it's you.
EH?
DRIP
DRIP
JOLT
.....

NO ISSUES HERE.
CREEP
.....


SO THERE'S NO...
...PROB-LEM.
DRIP
BUT I HAVE A BIT OF TIME LEFT UNTIL MY BRAIN DIES.....
AHH ...
AH .....
I RAN INTO..... SOME COMPLICA-TIONS...
MY BODY WAS SPLIT IN TWO, ACTUALLY.

SPIN

STEP
STEP
CREAK
SIGN: ENSHRINEMENT CHAMBER
STEP
ONCE YOU'VE PULLED OFF YOUR TRICK ...
... CATCH UP WITH ME AS SOON AS YOU CAN.
BEEP
I'M HEADING BACK THERE NOW.
STEP
I GOT IT.
YEAH.
ROGERE.
...I'LL TORMENT AND KILL YOU IN YOUR DREAMS. ♡
IF YOU MAKE ME WAIT TOO LONG ...

I'VE GOT SOMETHING USEFUL FOR YOUR PERFORMANCE HERE.
DON'T WORRY.
THIS LITTLE "TRICK" OF MINE IS GOING TO WOW YOU.

WELL... LET'S GO.
TIME TO START THE ENCORE!!

DEATH 44: SWEET DREAMS
ゲ!
BOOM
CLATTER
!!
CRACK

SNAP
PSHT
TWITCH
TWITCH
!!
BADUM
...
IT'S NO USE TRYING TO MOVE.
UNWRAP

PLACE
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, YOUNG MISS.
THIS IS OUR THIRD TIME MEETING, NO?
...

THAT SAID..... LAST TIME, OUR LITTLE LI HONG KNOCKED YOU OUT.
!?
WE DIDN'T TALK MUCH, AND YOU MAY NOT RECALL ALL THAT HAPPENED.

WHY DO YOU THINK YOU GOT OUT OF THAT ALIVE?
BECAUSE I SAVED YOU. WITH MORE THAN JUST FIRST AID.

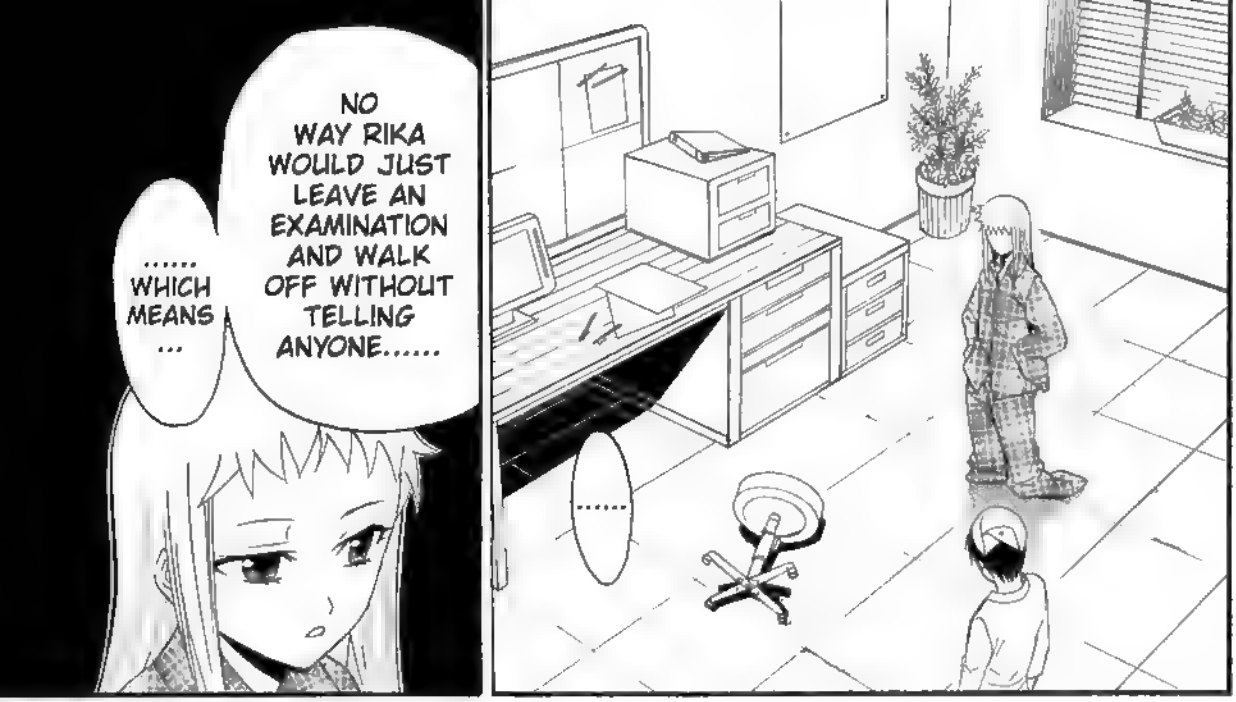
HEH HEH..... NO NEED FOR THAT LOOK.
I SAVED YOUR LIFE, YOU KNOW.
!?

...!
GLARE

ZOMBIE POWDER (CHEMICAL) A MEDICINE USED TO TURN A HUMAN INTO A SLAVE-LIKE ZOMBIE WITHOUT A WILL OF HIS/HER OWN. A NUMBER OF POISONS AND INGREDIENTS FROM CORPSES GIVE THIS DRUG ITS POTENCY.
YOU'RE IMMOBILE NOW BECAUSE IT ACTIVATED AT MY SIGNAL, YOUNG MISS.
WELL... I ALSO TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO STICK SOME OF MY SPECIAL ZOMBIE POWDER INSIDE YOUR BODY.
WHY..... USE..... VOODOO... LIKE THAT?
BO— — KOR .....
.....
TREMBLE
TREMBLE
.....
SLUMP
...I WANT TO SEE. AND OTHERS I WANT TO HAVE.
THERE ARE THINGS ...

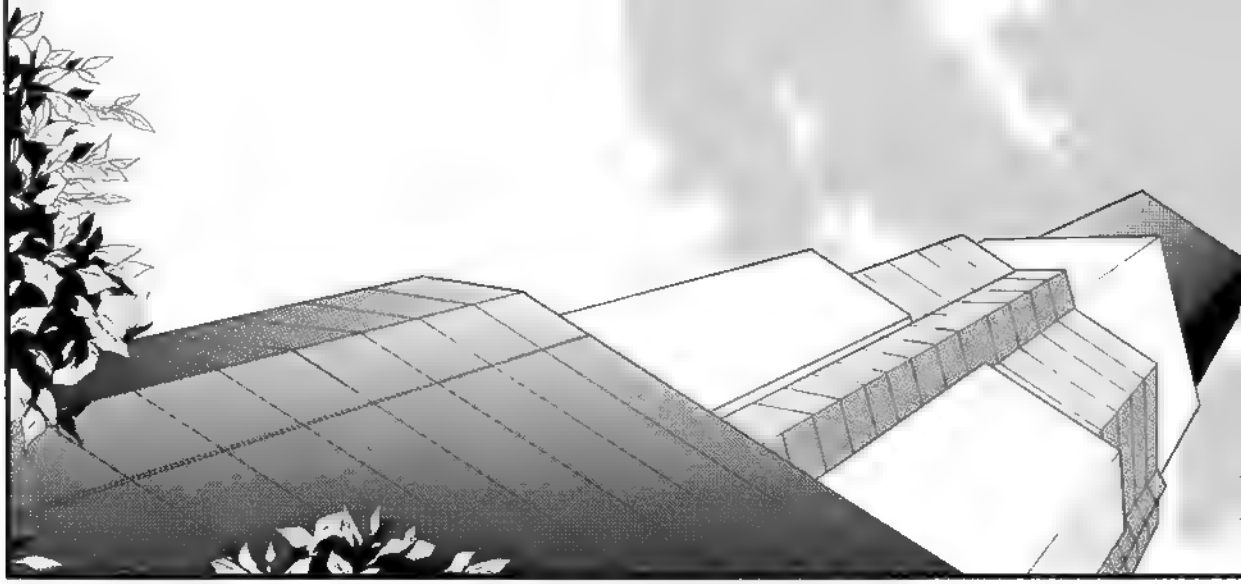
DEATH 44: SWEET DREAMS

RISE
.....
.....
FEELS LIKE..... SOMETHING REALLY BAD HAPPENED...
..... WHAT? THIS FEELING...
WHAT'S WRONG?
U-UMM, IT'S RIKA-SAMA, SHE...
SAKI-SAN! PLEASE WAKE UP!!
!!
KNOCK
コンコン
KNOCK


NO WAY RIKA WOULD JUST LEAVE AN EXAMINATION AND WALK OFF WITHOUT TELLING ANYONE.....
..... WHICH MEANS ...
.....

HEY.
WHEN'D YOU LAST SEE RIKA?
AH. UMM..... WHEN I LED HER LAST PATIENT BACK HERE.

HMM .....
HER LAST PATIENT.....? THERE'VE BEEN LOTS OF PEOPLE IN AND OUT OF THIS HOSPITAL SINCE THE ATTACK.....
IT'D BE EASY TO BLEND IN WITH THEM .....
RIKA AND I ARE CONNECTED BY OUR BOND.
I'LL FIND HER SOON ENOUGH.
..... AH. UM, SAKI-SAN...
IT'S FINE.



SLIDE

MORNING.
GOOD MORNING.
AH.
GOOD MORNING, RIKA-SAMA.

HAVING THE YOUNG MISS WITH US MEANS A FREE PASS TO MOST AREAS IN HERE.
HEH-HEH .....SEE? WHAT'D I TELL YOU, MILAM?

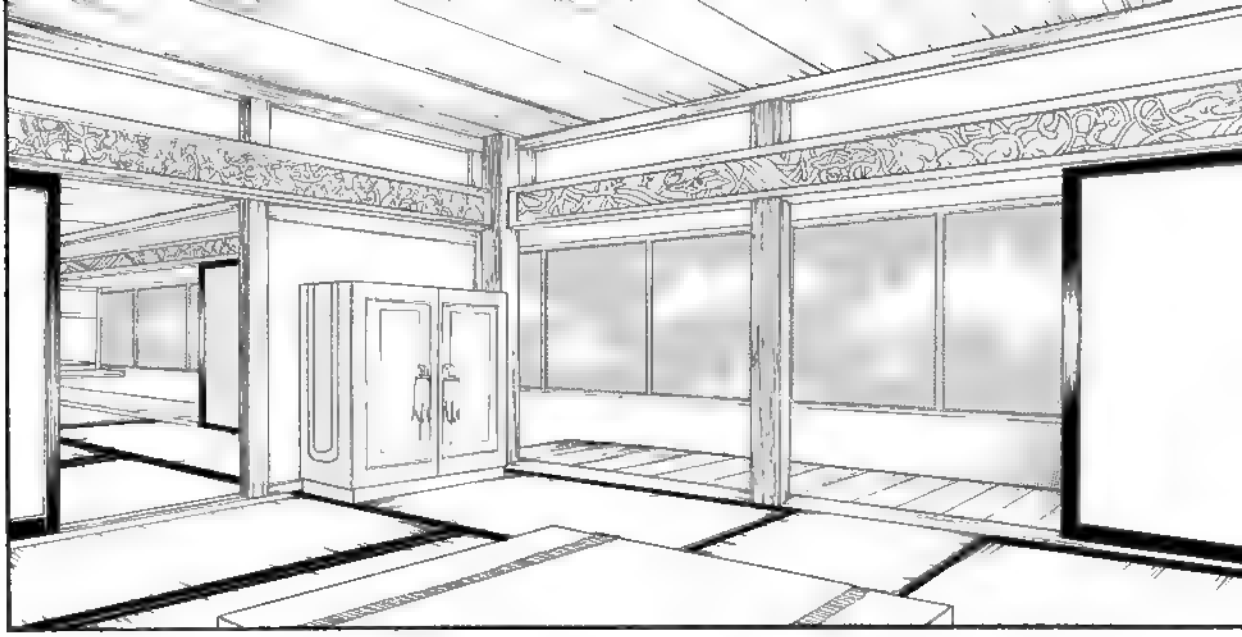
AS IF.
YOUR TYPE OF POSSESSION LETS YOU READ MINDS AND MEMORIES TOO, NO?
INDEED .....
VERY HANDY. WHY NOT DO THAT TO MY BODY AS WELL?

SO A BEAUTY LIKE THE YOUNG MISS HERE IS MORE THAN GOOD ENOUGH.
BESIDES... WE'RE TRYING TO KEEP CASUALTIES TO A MINIMUM.

I NEED TO MAKE A QUICK STOP.
..... RIGHT! SORRY, MILAM.

?

OH! I'M ENVIOUS. YOU REALLY STICK UP FOR THESE HUMANS.
..... HMPH.



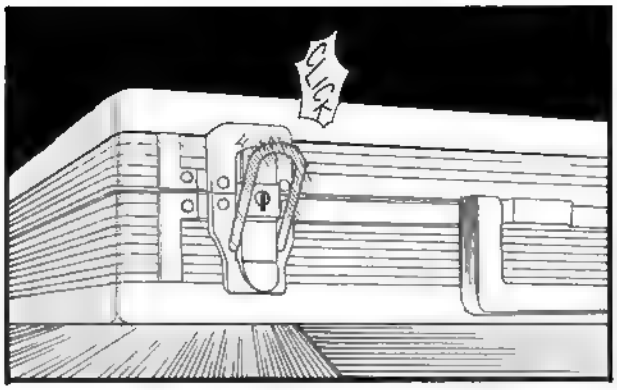
!
THAT'S .....
FWUMP
HMM..... THAT'S NOT IT...
FWUMP
..... WHOOPS. THIS ONE?
22F D-3 private room
Rika 荒神
Aragami 莉花

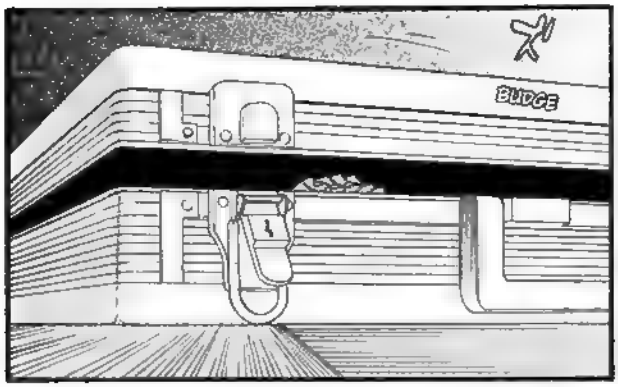
IT'S A RESEARCH TRANSCRIPT FOR THE DEATH MAIDEN SUTRAS.
I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR THIS.
SWIRL
屍法姫教典
DEATH MAIDEN SUTRAS
写本第参遅
THIRD TRANSCRIPT

THE TECHNIQUE TO PRODUCE CORPSE PRINCESSES IS THE KOUGON SECT'S GREATEST AND MOST TABOO ONE.....
THE REAL SUTRAS ARE GUARDED UNDER LOCK AND KEY, BUT GIVEN THEIR CURRENT NEED FOR CORPSE PRINCESSES, I SUSPECTED THEY MIGHT HAVE TRANSCRIPTS LIKE THIS LYING AROUND.....I WAS RIGHT.
HMM.
.....BUT WHAT'S YOUR INTEREST IN IT?

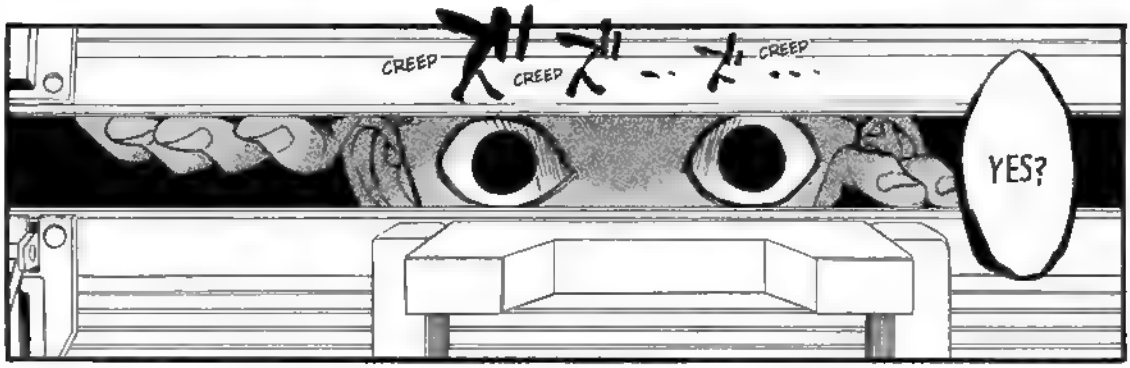
IT'S A TRUMP CARD.
GOING FORWARD..... FOR ME AND AKASHA.

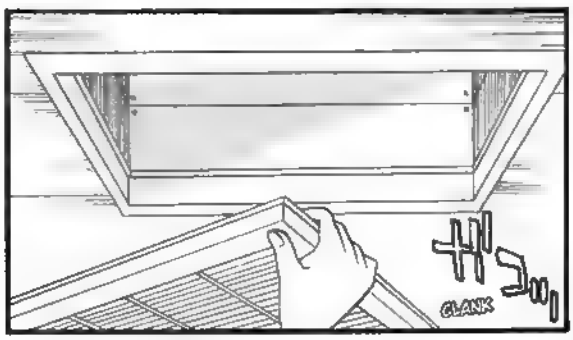
IF IT'S SO IMPORTANT, WHY NOT MANIPULATE THIS GIRL INTO FETCHING YOU THE REAL THING?
THERE SHOULD BE ONE AT HER FAMILY'S RESIDENCE, NO?
EASIER SAID THAN DONE.
ZOMBIE POWDER IS A POWERFUL SUBSTANCE WITH INHERENT LIMITATIONS.
USING IT MULTIPLE TIMES COULD VERY WELL BREAK THE YOUNG MISS...


CLICK


BUDGE

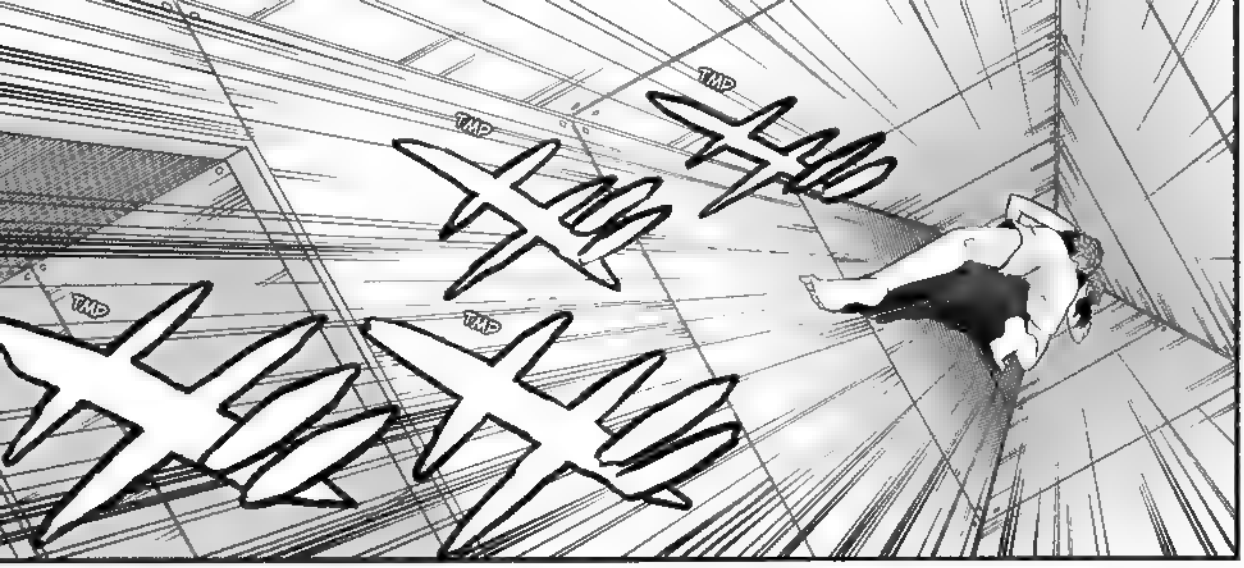
ANYWAY..... THAT'S ONE THING I NEEDED TO TAKE CARE OF.
IAN!!

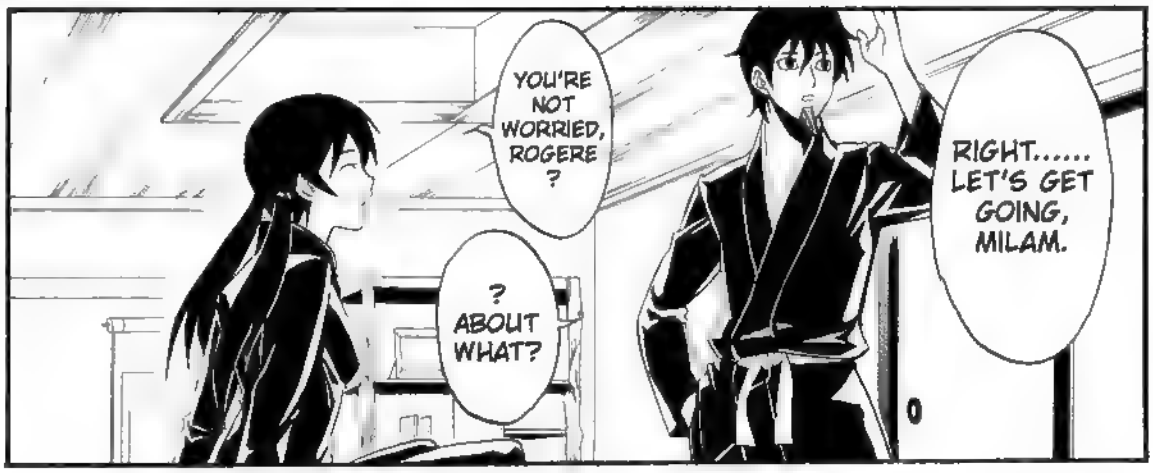

CREEP
CREEP
CREEP
YES?


CLANK

CRAWL

YES.
SNEAK BACK TO THE HIDEOUT WITHOUT BEING SEEN, AND GET THIS TO AKASHA.
GO ON..... NOW!


TMP
TMP
TMP
TMP

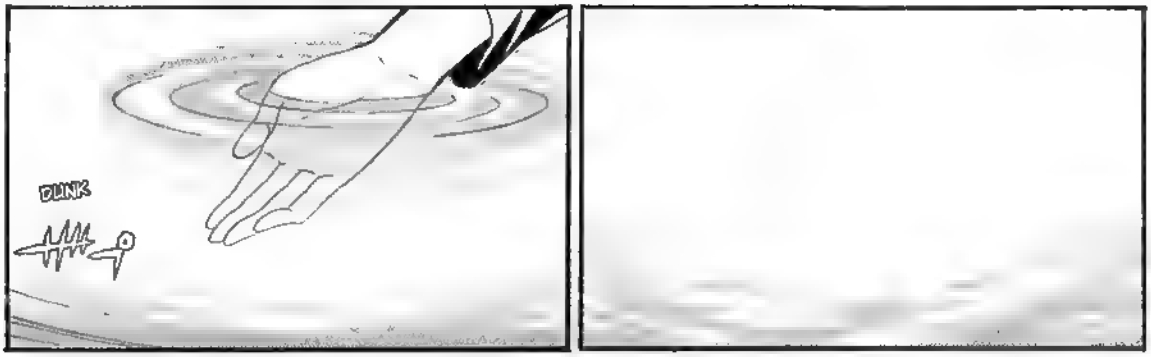

YOU'RE NOT WORRIED, ROGERE ?
? ABOUT WHAT?
RIGHT..... LET'S GET GOING, MILAM.

CAN YOU REALLY FIGHT WITHOUT THAT BOY?
YOUR "YOUNG MISS" IS A CONTRACTING MONK, SO HER BOND WILL BE LEADING HER CORPSE PRINCESS HERE SOON ENOUGH.

FOR THE NEXT HOUR OR SO, NO ONE CAN USE BOND-SENSING TO TRACK HER.
...SUPPOSEDLY.
AKASHA MADE AN ITEM FOR ME THAT SEVERS BONDS FOR A SHORT TIME.
BESIDES... THE YOUNG MISS'S BOND *ISN'T* TRACEABLE AT THE MOMENT.
!?
..... OH, I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT THAT.

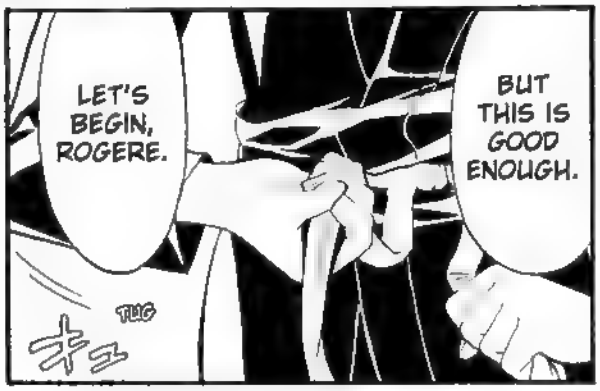
NOD
YOU KNOW WHERE TO GO .....
RIGHT ?
FU-FU ..... LET'S BE OFF, ROGERE.
TMP
OH?
WELL, AS LONG AS I'M NOT INTER-RUPTED.
RUMBLE
BEEP BEEP
Bio-metrics con-firmed... Unlock-ing.

OOH .....
SO THIS SENDS OUT PURIFIED HOLY WATER TO THE KOUGON SECT'S HEAD TEMPLE..... NO, TO ALL OF YAMA CITY, EVEN.....
YOU COULD SAY IT'S WHERE THE BLOOD OF THE CITY ITSELF IS BORN.....


DUNK

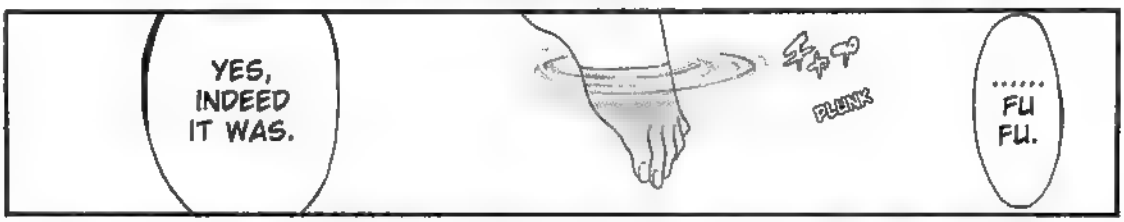
NO SURPRISE THAT THAT TASK WAS BEYOND ME.....
U-FU-FU... A SHAME.
SWIRL SWIRL

ORIGINALLY..... I WAS TO AIM FOR THE ORB CHAMBER, WHICH CONTROLS THIS SPRING AS IF A HEART OR A BRAIN.....
SPLASH
SPLASH


BUT THIS IS GOOD ENOUGH.
LET'S BEGIN, ROGERE.
TUG

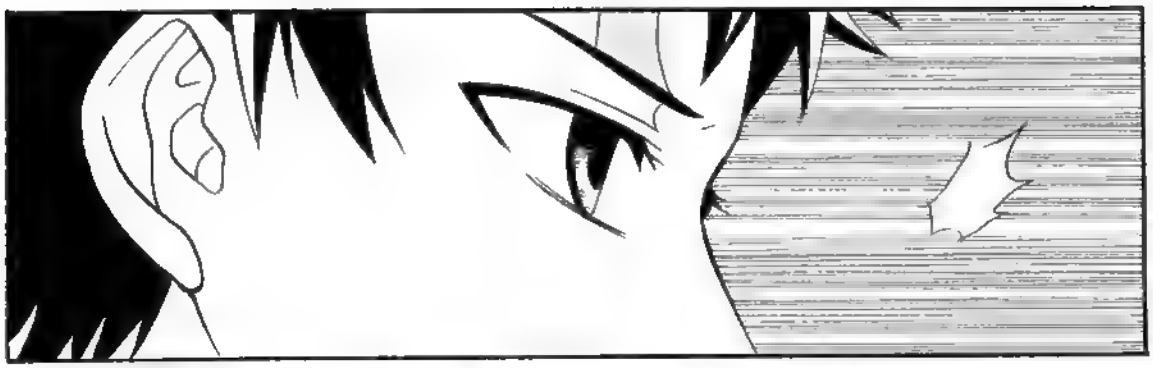
FU FU... IT'S JUST...
GIGGLE
GIGGLE
HEY. DON'T LAUGH.
I'M READY ON MY END.
YES.
I NEVER IMAGINED YOU'D CHANGE CLOTHES WHILE SO DEEP IN ENEMY TERRITORY .....
I HAVEN'T SEEN THAT OUTFIT IN A GOOD WHILE...
I OUGHT TO SEE YOU OFF IN STYLE.
TCH ...
BECAUSE THIS IS YOUR FINAL TASK.
I LIKE MAKING THE DISTINC-TION.
DON'T MOCK ME FOR IT.
HOW KIND OF YOU, ROGERE.
YES..... FU-FU.

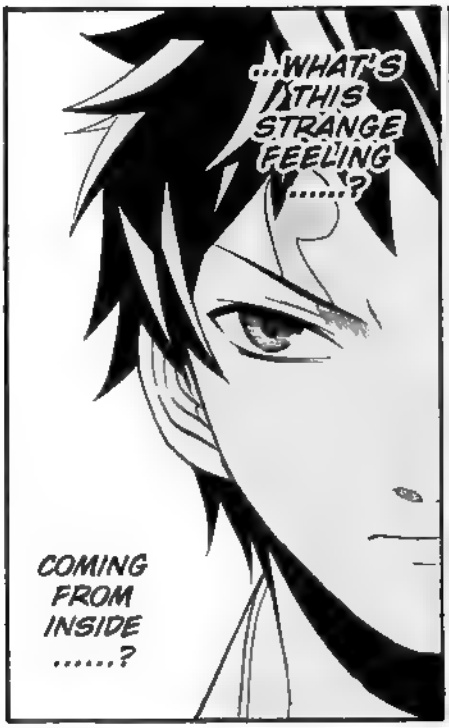
UNWRAP
YOU KNOW..... THE ONE WHO CONTACTED YOUR SUPERIORS AND BROUGHT YOU AND AKASHA TOGETHER ...
...WAS ME, IN THE FIRST PLACE.

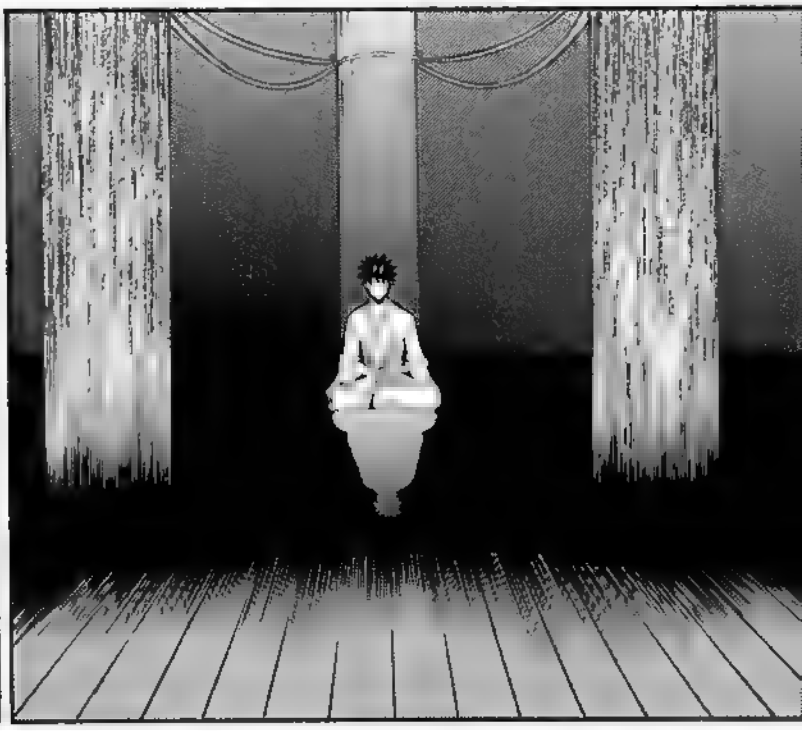

YES, INDEED IT WAS.
PLINK
..... FU FU.

FSSHH
FSSHH

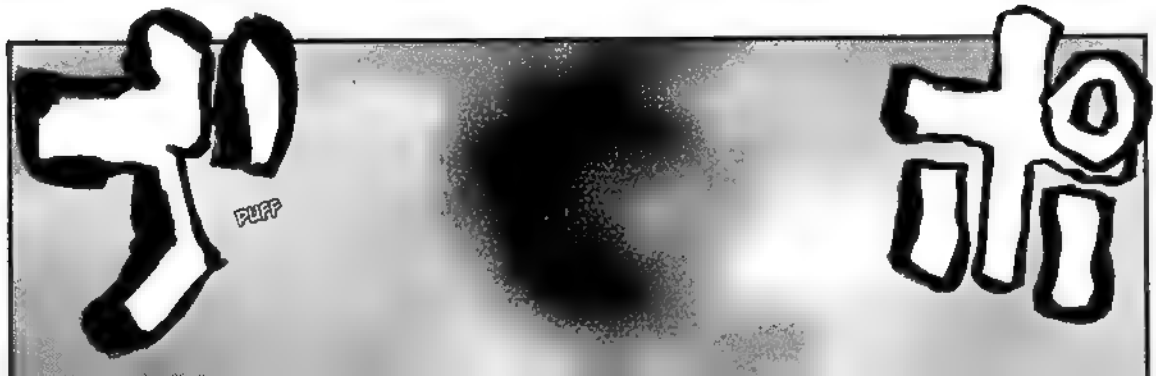
SPLASH
SPLASH




...WHAT'S THIS STRANGE FEELING.....?
COMING FROM INSIDE.....?



SOMEONE!
WHAT COULD IT BE.....?


PUFF

SIZZLE
SIZZLE
FSSHH

THOSE WORDS HE SPOKE .....
FU-FU...I REMEMBER IT WELL. WHEN YOU TWO CAME TO OUR ORGANIZATION .....

"THIS GENERATION'S KALI."
WRAP
"I REQUIRE HER LIFE."
SIZZLE

THE LIFE OF KALI .....
...YOU SAY?

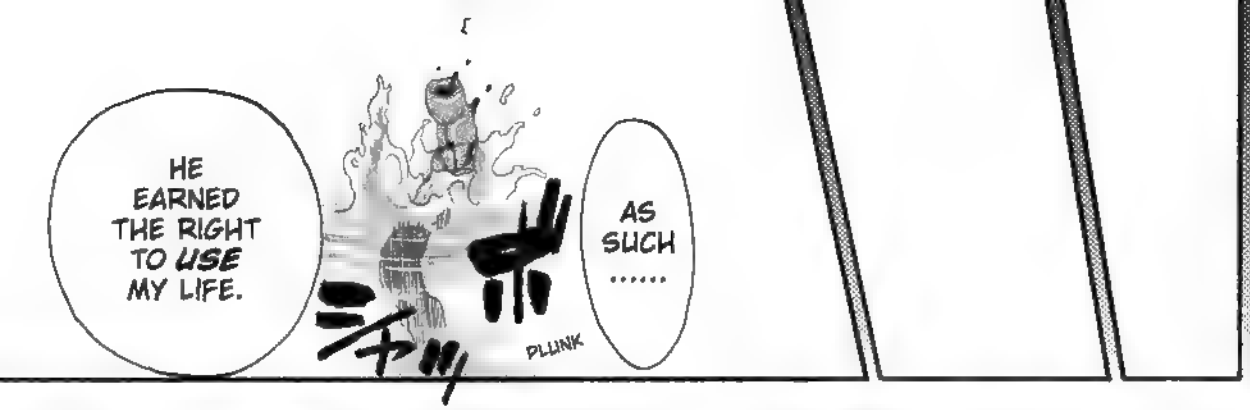
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
...DO YOU JEST? TO US, KALI ORDAINS US ASSASSINS IN PLACE OF THE GODDESS HERSELF..... SHE IS A DIVINE AGENT.
YOU WOULD BUY HER WITH MONEY ...?

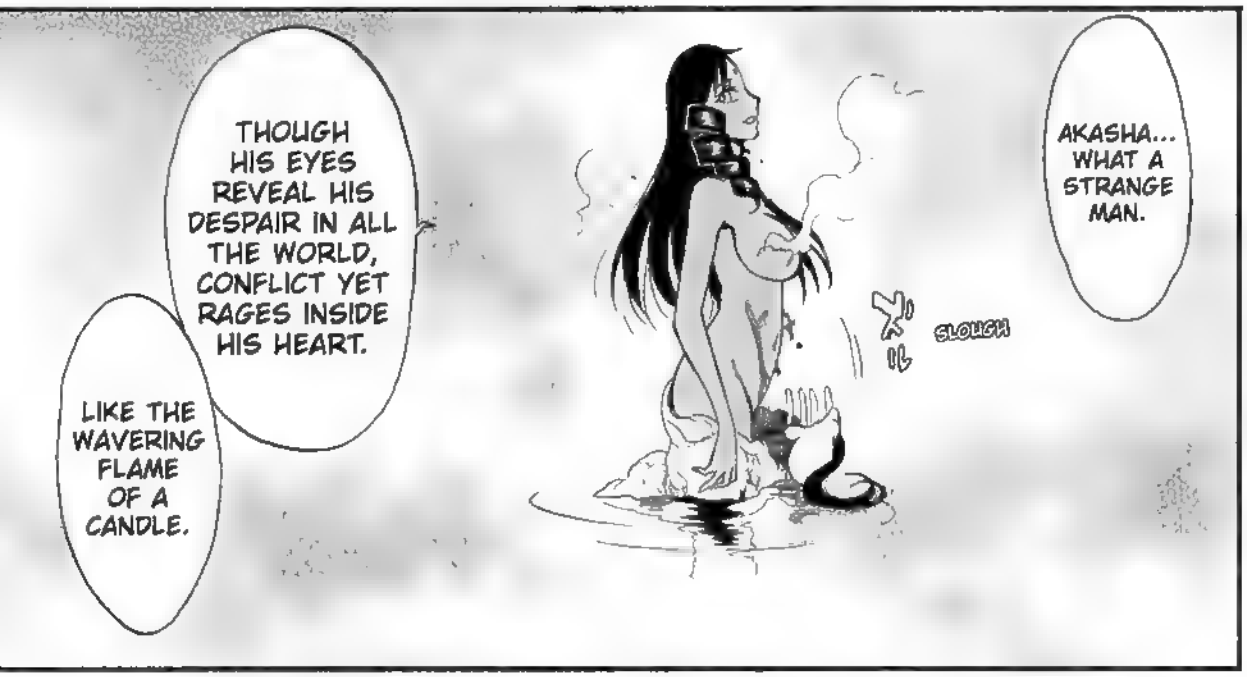
YES.

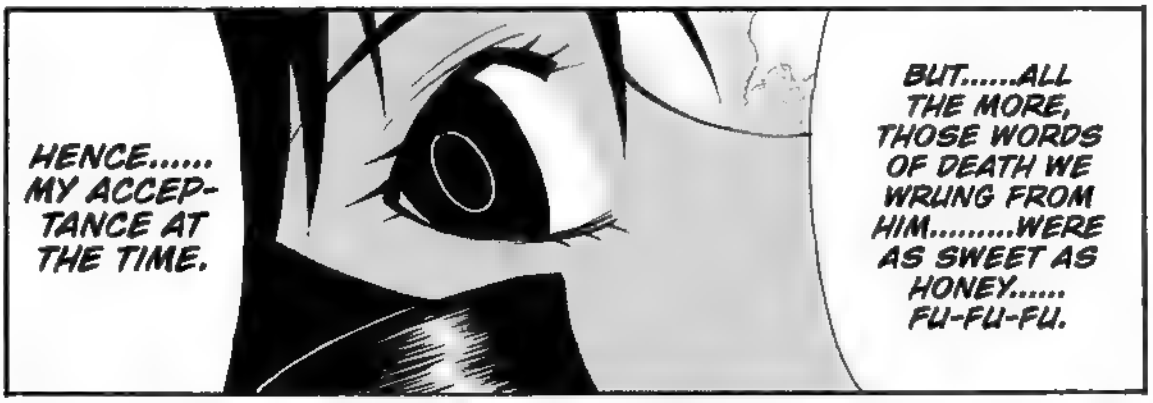
DID YOU REALLY THINK WE WOULD AGREE?
CREEP
A FOOLISH PROPOSITION.
APPEAR
SHING

APPEAR
.....
...BUT FOR US... FOR THE UNCLEAN BUNCH... SHE IS INDISPENS-ABLE.
YOUR KALI, AND HER POWER TO MAKE DREAMS CORPOREAL.
WHAT-EVER FOR?
URK..... WHOA, WHOA. MAYBE THIS WAS RECKLESS AFTER ALL, AKASHA.
.....
IN ORDER ...
...TO KILL THIS WORLD.

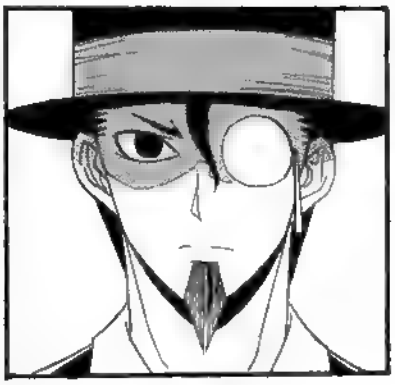
.....
FUFU.
A FASCINATING STORY.
チャラ
JANGLE
!
!
MILAM!
WHOA !?
WHERE'D SHE...?
VERY WELL, MONK. MY LIFE IS YOURS.
... HOW-EVER ...
ONCE IT IS DONE..... YOU WILL WAGER ALL YOU HAVE..... ON THAT NIGHTMARE.
.....
UNDERSTOOD.

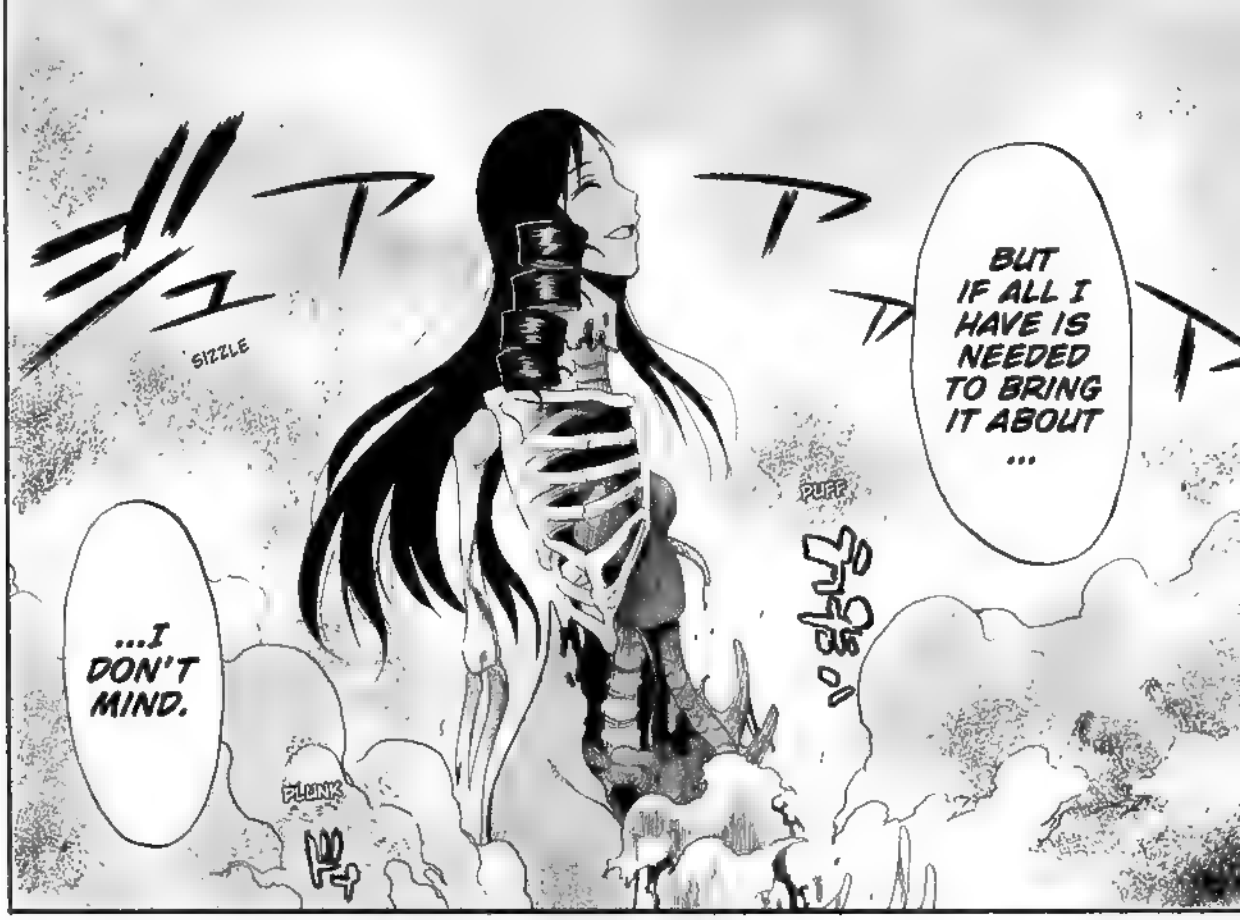

HE EARNED THE RIGHT TO USE MY LIFE.
PLUNK
AS SUCH .....

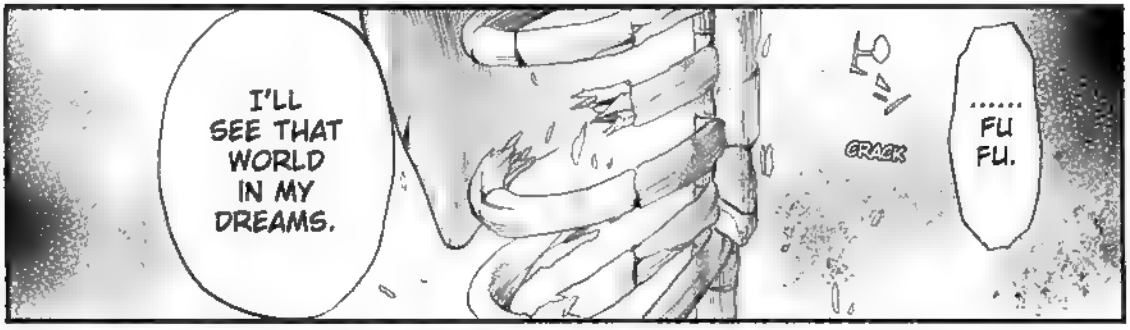

THOUGH HIS EYES REVEAL HIS DESPAIR IN ALL THE WORLD, CONFLICT YET RAGES INSIDE HIS HEART.
LIKE THE WAVERING FLAME OF A CANDLE.
SLOUCH
AKASHA... WHAT A STRANGE MAN.


HENCE..... MY ACCEP-TANCE AT THE TIME.
BUT.....ALL THE MORE, THOSE WORDS OF DEATH WE WRUNG FROM HIM.....WERE AS SWEET AS HONEY..... FU-FU-FU.

...I WILL NEVER SEE AKASHA'S DEAD WORLD WITH MY OWN EYES.
IT SEEMS A SHAME THAT NOW...
FSSHH
FU-FU .....
SIZZLE




SIZZLE
BUT IF ALL I HAVE IS NEEDED TO BRING IT ABOUT ...
PUFF
...I DON'T MIND.
PLUNK

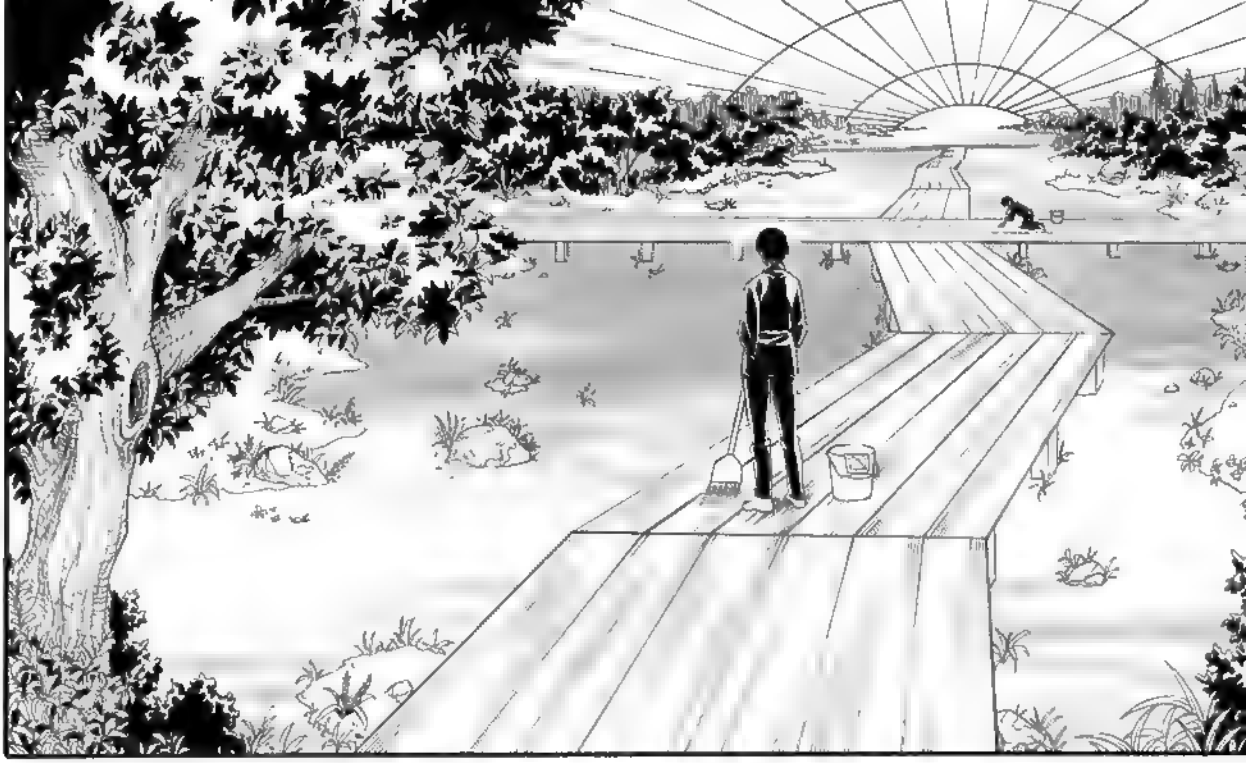

I'LL SEE THAT WORLD IN MY DREAMS.
CRACK
..... FU FU.

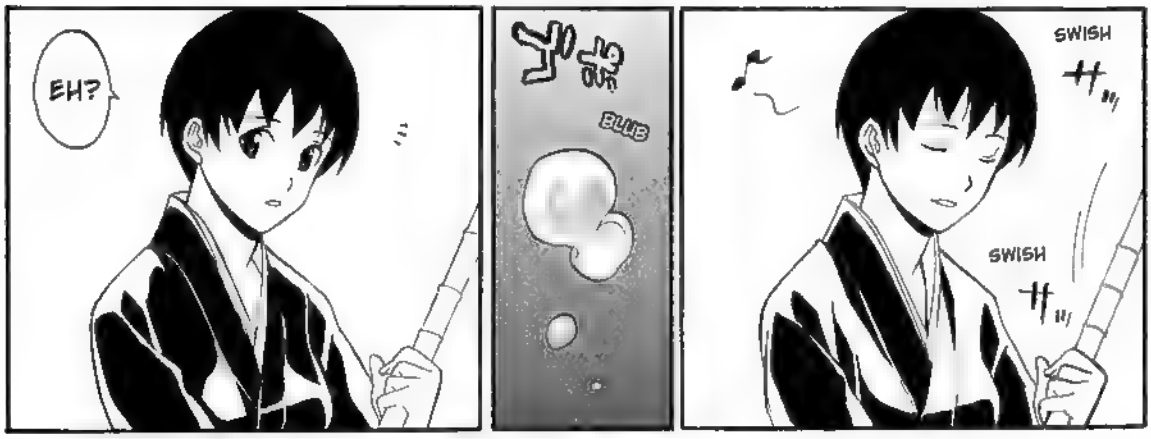
*GOOD NIGHT.

SUBHA RATRI.
SUBHA RATRI.*
...WELL THEN, ROGERE.
CRACK
CRACK

PLUNK
ピチョ

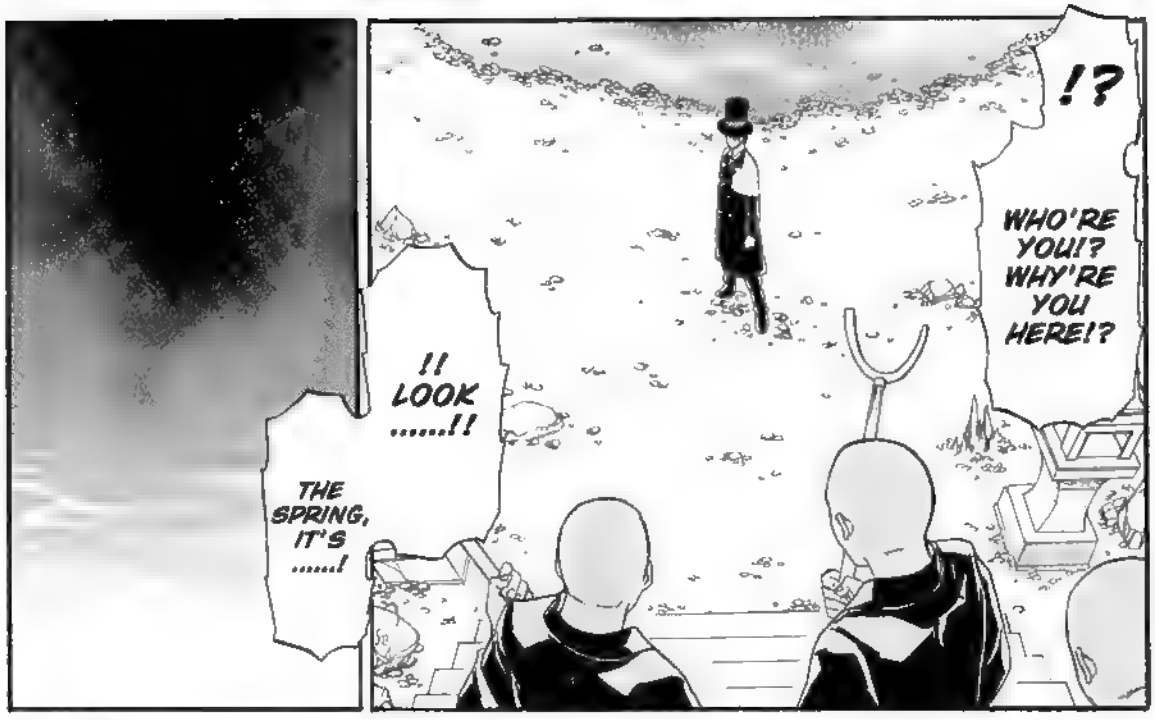
YOU GAVE YOUR OWN FLESH AND BLOOD TO POLLUTE THIS SPRING AND BRING ABOUT YOUR FINAL AND GREATEST NIGHTMARE.
YOU PERFORMED ADMIRABLY TO THE VERY END, "KALI."
THE WAY IS PAVED FOR OUR KING.




EH?
ゴボ
BLUB
SWISH
SWISH

KYAHHHHH!!
.....!
ぷくん
FLOAT

THIS IS.....
.....
CRUMBLE
STOMP
STOMP


!?
WHO'RE YOU!? WHY'RE YOU HERE!?
!! LOOK .....!!
THE SPRING, IT'S .....!

A SHAME YOU HAD TO GET SO WORKED UP AND BURST IN HERE...
... MONKS OF THE KOUGON SECT.
BECAUSE KALI'S CURSE IS STILL WORKING ITS MAGIC.

SHING
IF YOU INSIST ON BOORISHLY DISRUPTING THE GODDESS'S SLEEP...
...THEN YOU WILL FACE THE WRATH OF MY GODS, THE LOA.....!!
DASH
ENOUGH ...!
GET HIM!!
LEAP
WHAM
!!

TURN
WHA—
RIKA-SAMA !?
!?
SKID
SKID
SKID
SKID

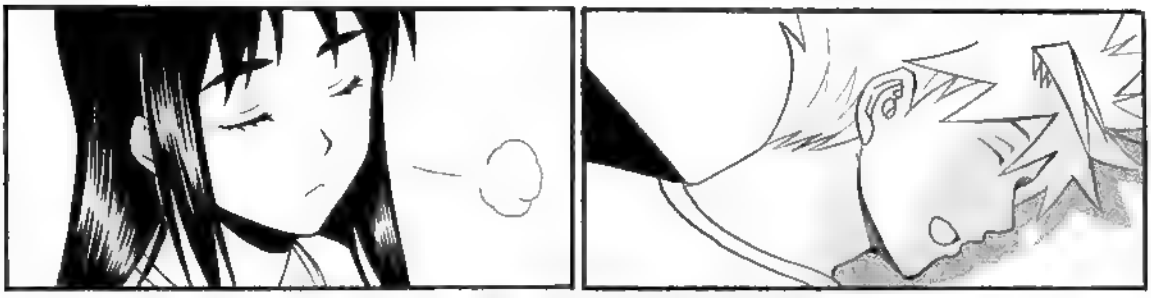
THAT EXPRESSION..... CLEARLY, SHE'S.....
WHAT'D YOU DO TO HER!?
YOU ...!!

RIGHT, YOUNG MISS?
I USE WHATEVER I CAN TO FIGHT.
SORRY, BUT I'M JUST AN ORDINARY HUMAN.

KACHAK
YES.....
FWIP
GOLDEN ...
... CLAWED... FIST...
FOOM
NO..... WAY.
GUH ...
HER SEALED MANDALA ...!!
HEH HEH HEH.
WHOOSH
WHAT NOW.....? JUST STAND THERE AND WAIT, WON'T YOU.....?

むか
SNORE

すぴょ
BREATHE
すぴょ
BREATHE
WHEEZE
ゲヒー
.....
AND THAT RIDICULOUS FACE IS JUST SO PUNCHABLE.
COME ON..... AFTER ALL THAT TALK, YOU COLLAPSE FROM EXHAUSTION?



にゃ
REACH
NNN...
.....
WE'LL KEEP WORKING AT IT LATER, OURI.
WELL, I GUESS IT'S ALL BECAUSE YOU WERE TRYING TO HELP ME WITH MY CURSE..... I CAN'T STAY MAD.....

BIG BRO.
!!?
GRAB
WHAT...!? OURI, YOU DUMMY !!
GET OFFA ME..... AND WAKE UP!!
SNAP
.....
RUB
RUB
SQUISHY .....HUH?
BIG BRO..... YOU GOT ROUNDER?
SFX: RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE RUMBLE
.....
HUH?
WHY'S MY FACE HURT ...?
MORNING, HOSHIMURA-SAN.....
BAM

CHATTER
CHATTER
GEEZ... YOU'RE A WEIRDO WHEN YOU'RE ASLEEP .....
MONKS OUGHTA BEHAVE MORE FORMALLY, Y'KNOW .....
!
HUH..... SOUNDS LIKE A COMMOTION OUT THERE.
YOU'RE RIGHT..... WHAT'S GOING ON?
UMM... EXCUSE ME.
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?
HUH!? IT'S ANOTHER INTRUDER !!
HE'S TAKEN MISS ARAGAMI AS A HOSTAGE AND IS TAKING A STAND AT THE UNDERGROUND SPRING!!
STOMP
STOMP
!!
RIKA-SAN.....!!
HO— HOSHIMURA-SAN!!
LET'S MOVE, OURI!!

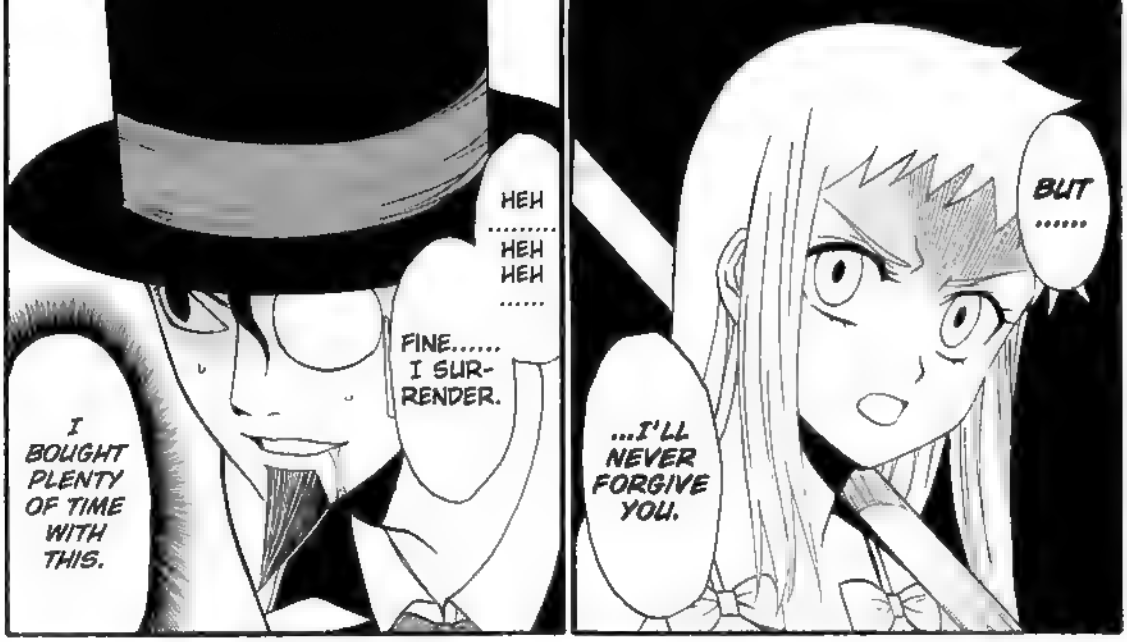
FWOOM
DASH
GUH ...
STAB
PIERCE
GYAHH !!
SLASH
GAHH !!
TCH .....
FWISH

TCH
.....
.....!
DODGE
GAHHH!
SUCC
.....!
RAISE
GAH
.....
HAA
.....

CLANG
GRIND
SCRATCH
YOU'RE..... ROGERE.... RIGHT?
..... YOU'RE A FAMILIAR FACE.

YOU .....
MANIPULATING MY RIKA... MAKING HER DO THIS...
I HOPE YOU'RE PREPARED FOR THE CONSE-QUENCES.
TWITCH
ピクッ
!!
WHOOSH
ヒュン
CHOP

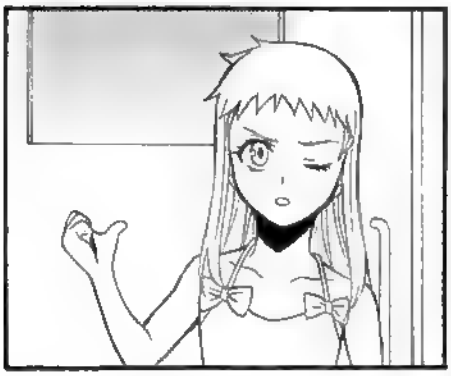
WHOOSH
WHA—
.....!
KAWHAM
!!
I WON'T KILL YOU.
I'M TOO LOW A RANK IN THE KOUGON SECT TO MAKE THAT DECISION.
.....
GAHH
.....

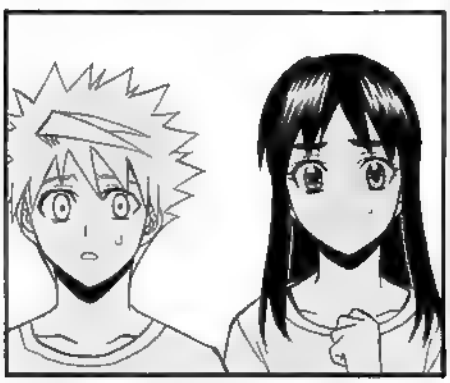

I BOUGHT PLENTY OF TIME WITH THIS.
HEH ..... HEH HEH .....
FINE..... I SURRENDER.
...I'LL NEVER FORGIVE YOU.
BUT .....

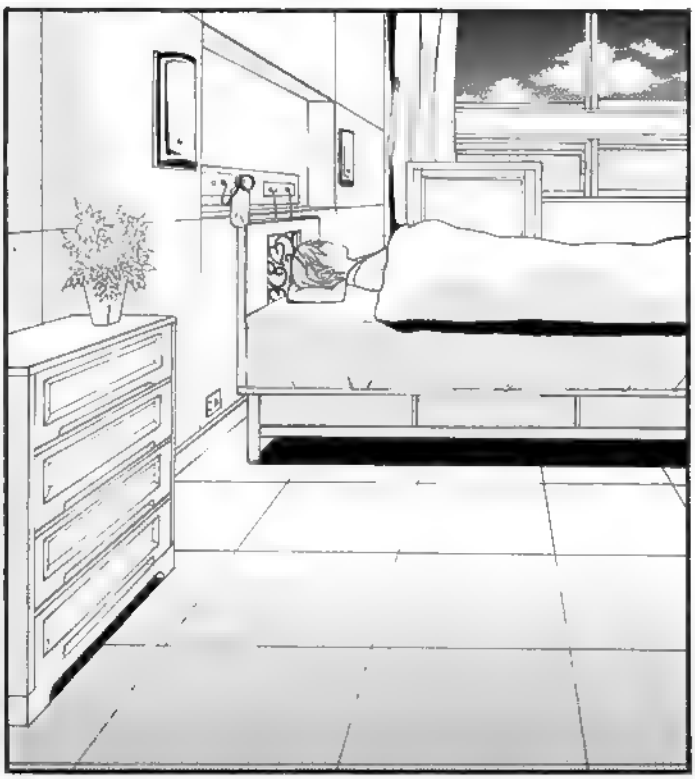
TAKE HIM TO THE PURIFICATION CHAMBER. DON'T LET NEWS OF THIS LEAK.
!
APPREHEND HIM.
YES.

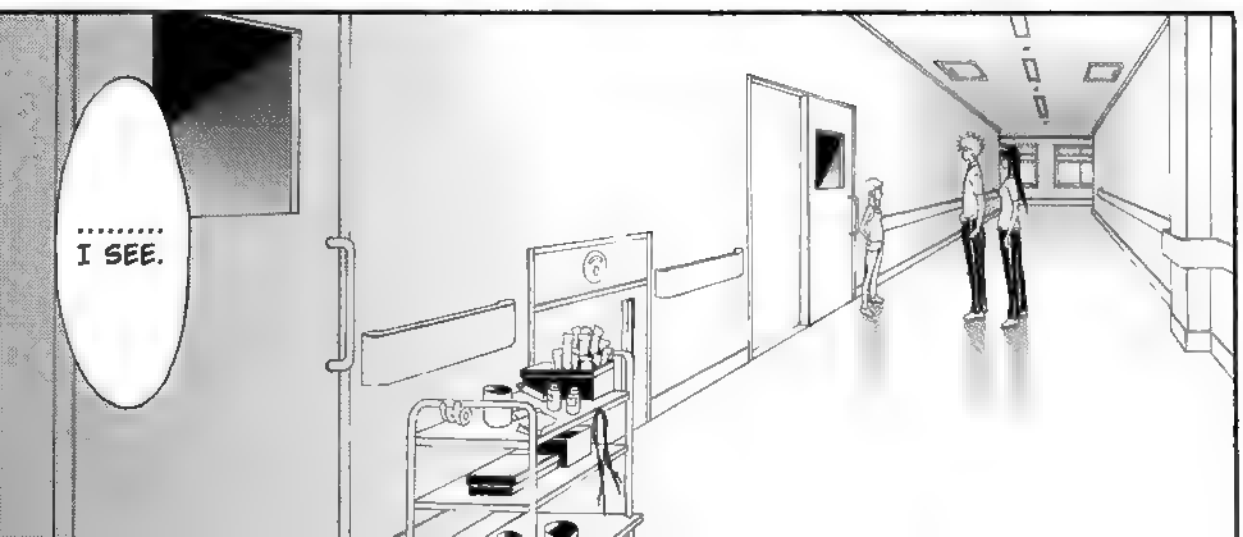
TAKAMINE .....
...
STEP

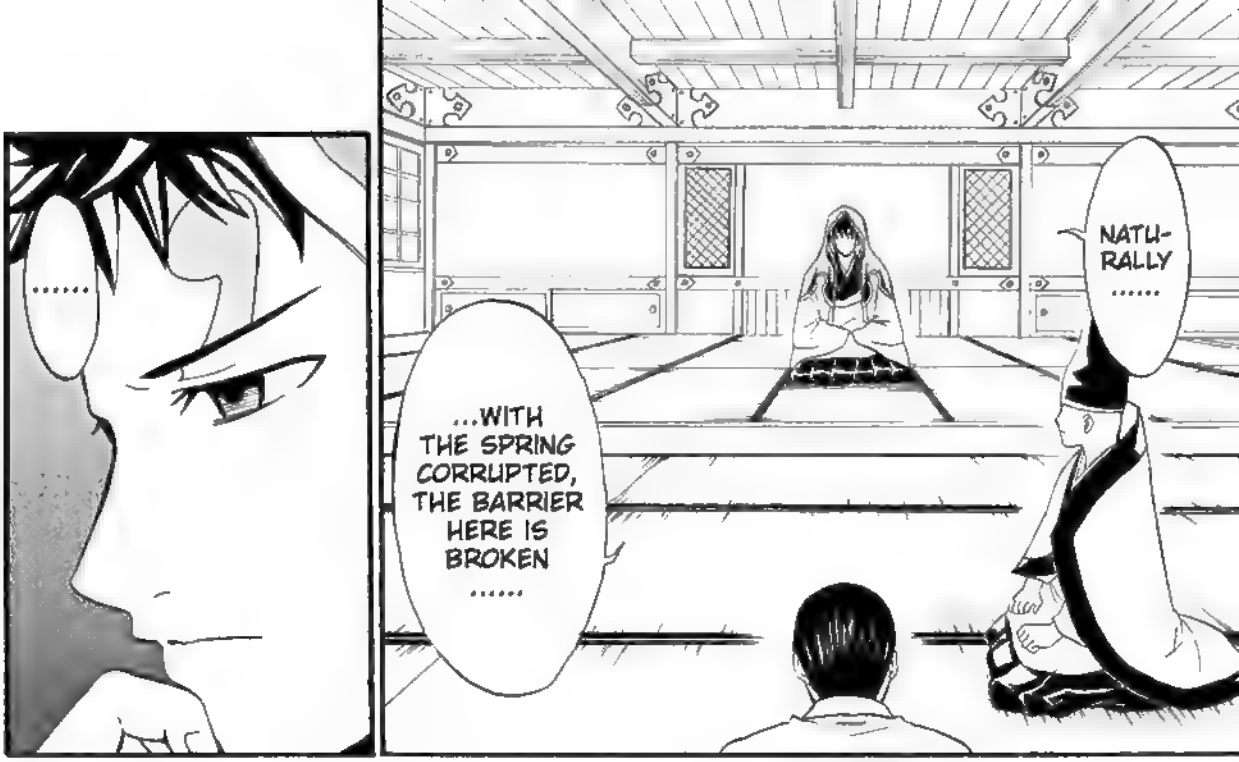
... BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY.
NOW IT'S TIME TO MAKE HIM TALK ...
WELL DONE, SAKI.

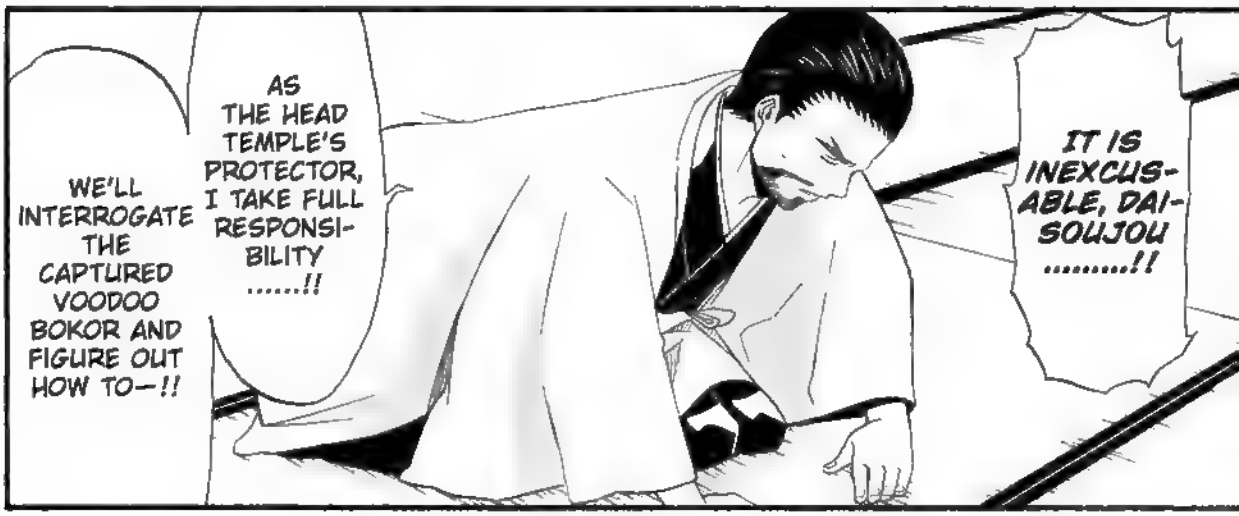


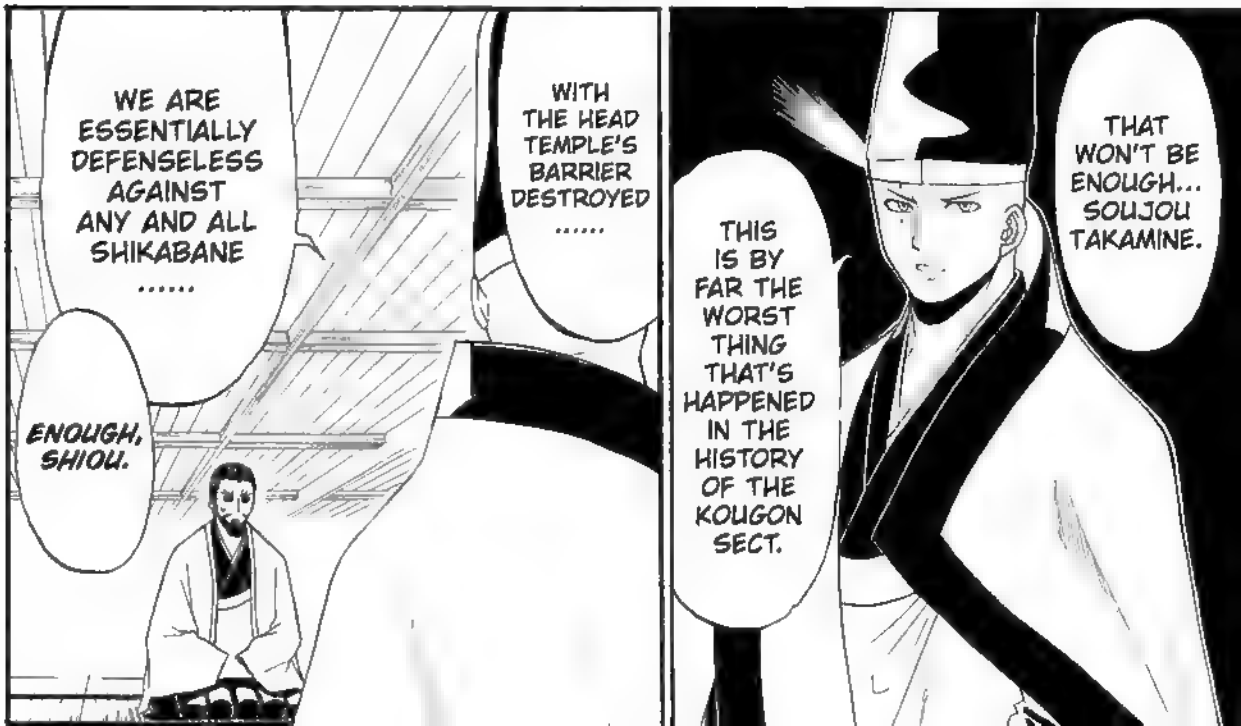





.....
I SEE.

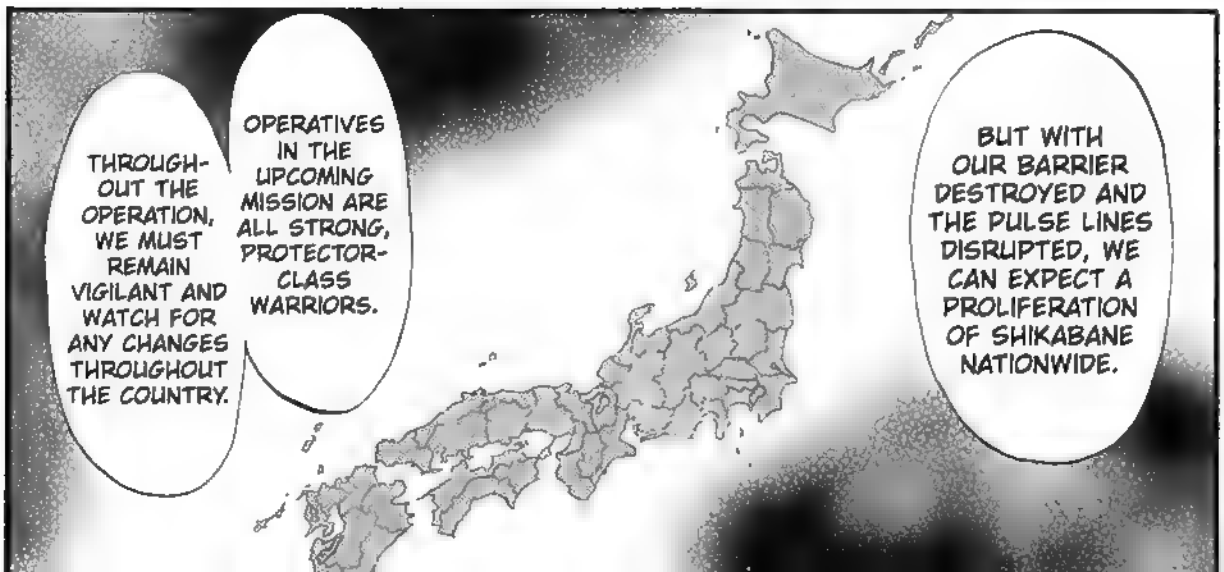

.....
...WITH THE SPRING CORRUPTED, THE BARRIER HERE IS BROKEN .....
NATURALLY .....

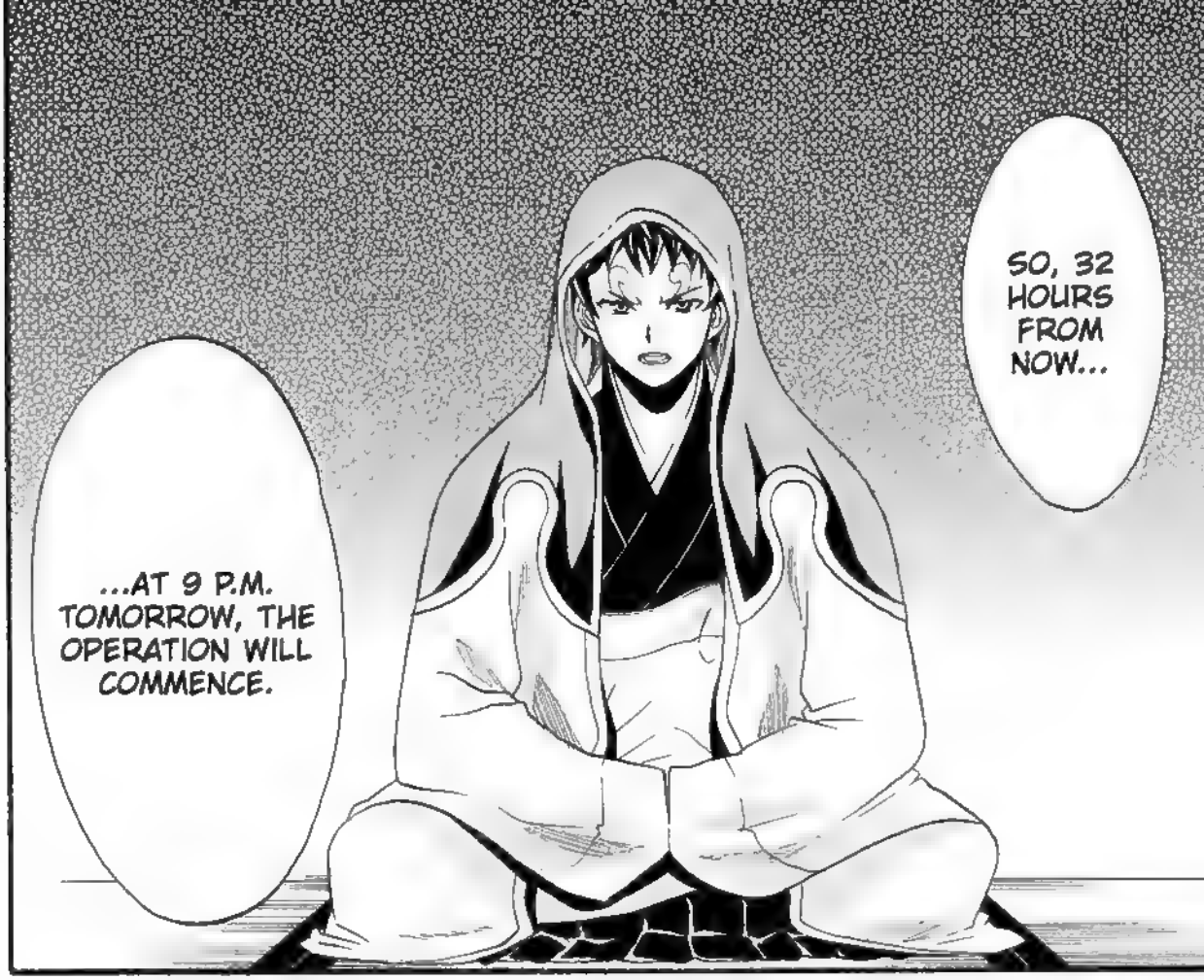

WE'LL INTERROGATE THE CAPTURED VOODOO BOKOR AND FIGURE OUT HOW TO—!!
AS THE HEAD TEMPLE'S PROTECTOR, I TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY .....!!
IT IS INEXCUSABLE, DAI-SOUJOU .....!!

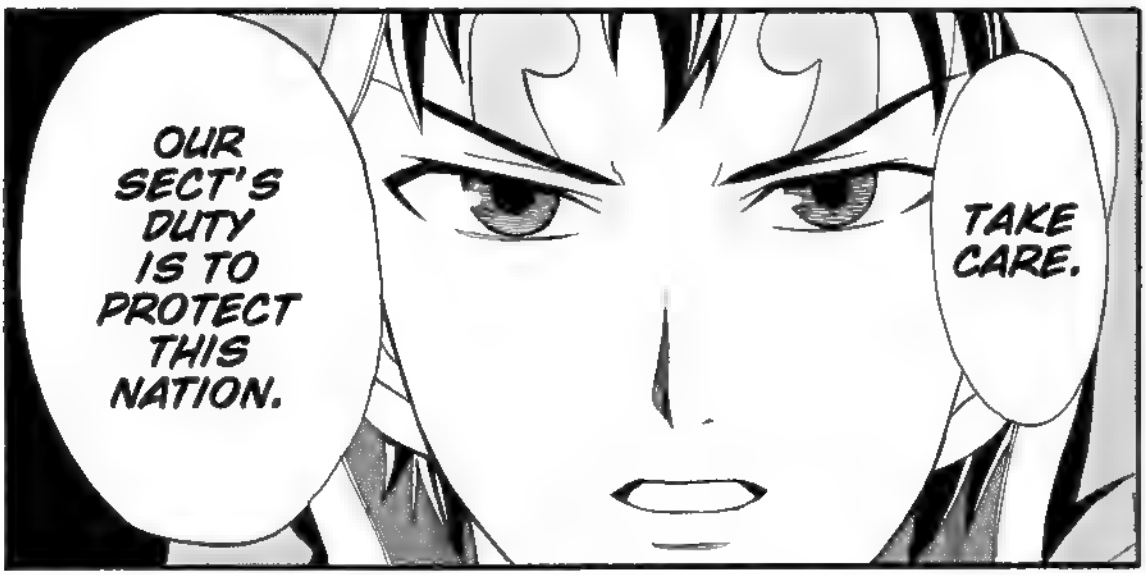

WE ARE ESSENTIALLY DEFENSELESS AGAINST ANY AND ALL SHIKABANE .....
WITH THE HEAD TEMPLE'S BARRIER DESTROYED .....
ENOUGH, SHIOU.
THIS IS BY FAR THE WORST THING THAT'S HAPPENED IN THE HISTORY OF THE KOUGON SECT.
THAT WON'T BE ENOUGH... SOUJOU TAKAMINE.

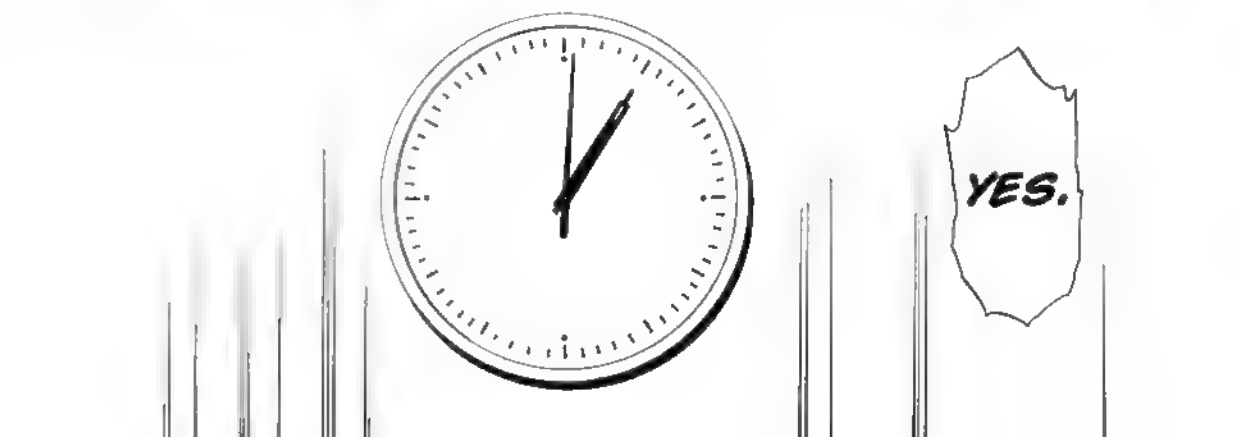
DAI-SOUJOU-SAMA...
SQUABBLING OVER WHO'S TO BLAME IS A WASTE OF PRECIOUS TIME.
RATHER ...

...OPER-ATION SEALED DEITY...
... MUST BE CARRIED OUT IMMEDI-ATELY.


BUT WITH OUR BARRIER DESTROYED AND THE PULSE LINES DISRUPTED, WE CAN EXPECT A PROLIFERATION OF SHIKABANE NATIONWIDE.
OPERATIVES IN THE UPCOMING MISSION ARE ALL STRONG, PROTECTOR-CLASS WARRIORS.
THROUGH-OUT THE OPERATION, WE MUST REMAIN VIGILANT AND WATCH FOR ANY CHANGES THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.


SO, 32 HOURS FROM NOW...
...AT 9 P.M. TOMORROW, THE OPERATION WILL COMMENCE.


OUR SECT'S DUTY IS TO PROTECT THIS NATION.
TAKE CARE.


YES.

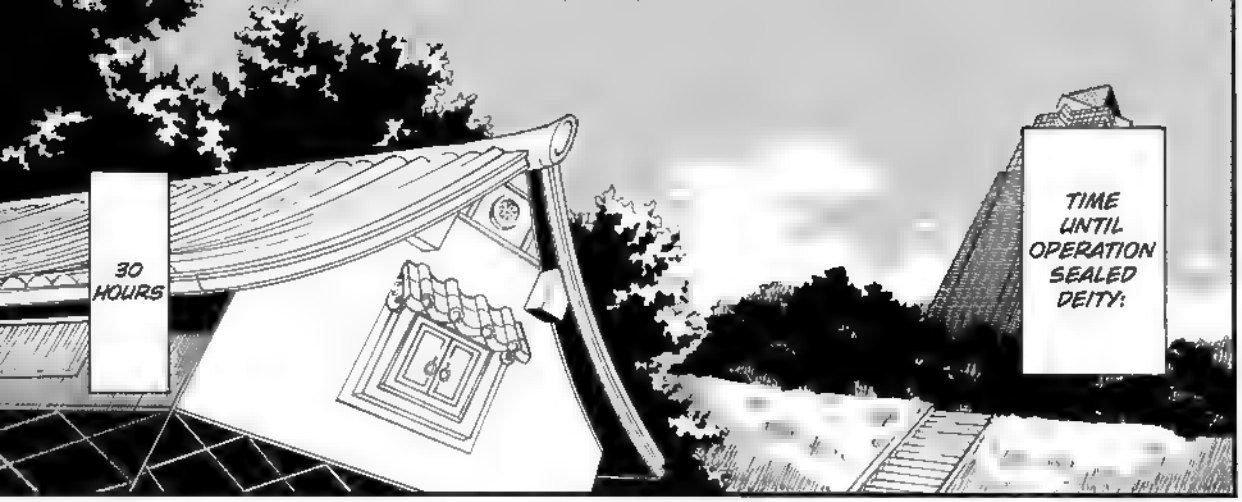
DEATH 44.5: KAMIKA TODOROKI

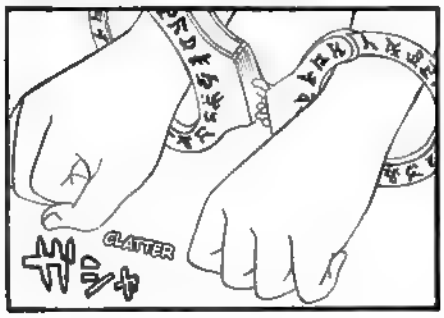
CORPSE PRINCESS
PRODUCTION HELPERS:

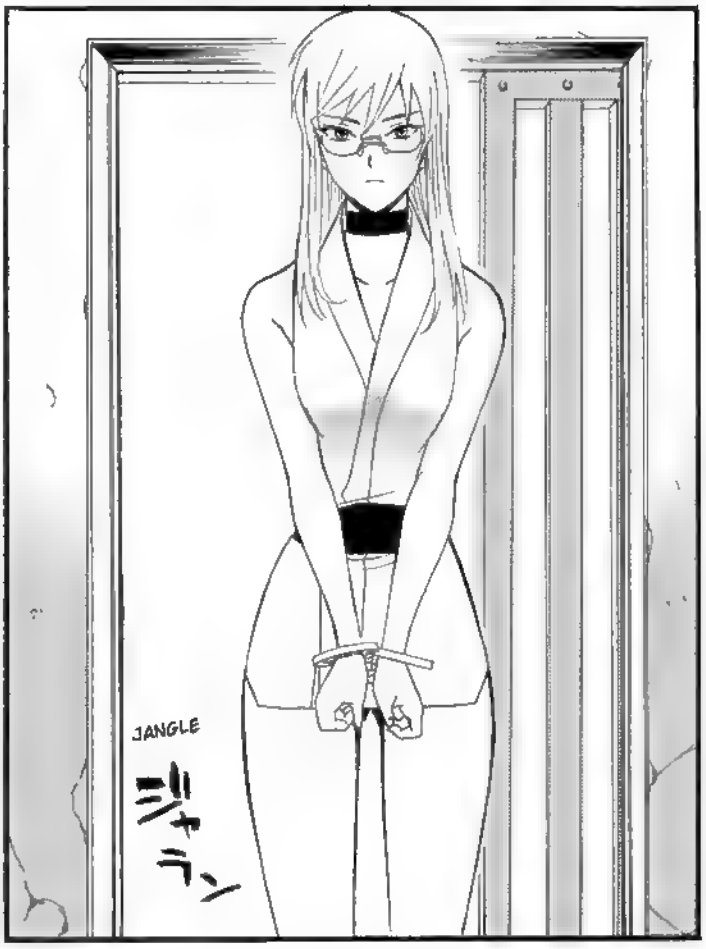
NIJOU-TSUAN
OOSUMI-SAN
TSUJI-SAN
USAMI-SAN
KATOU-SAN
YOSHIOKA-SAN
YAMAUCHI-SAN

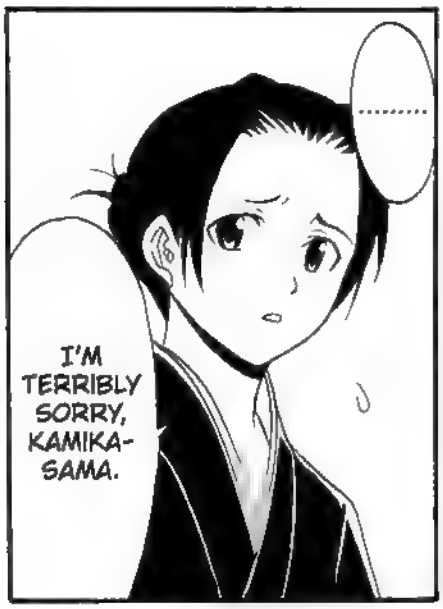
SUPERVISOR: SHIMIZU

AND THANKS TO ALL THE READERS OUT THERE!

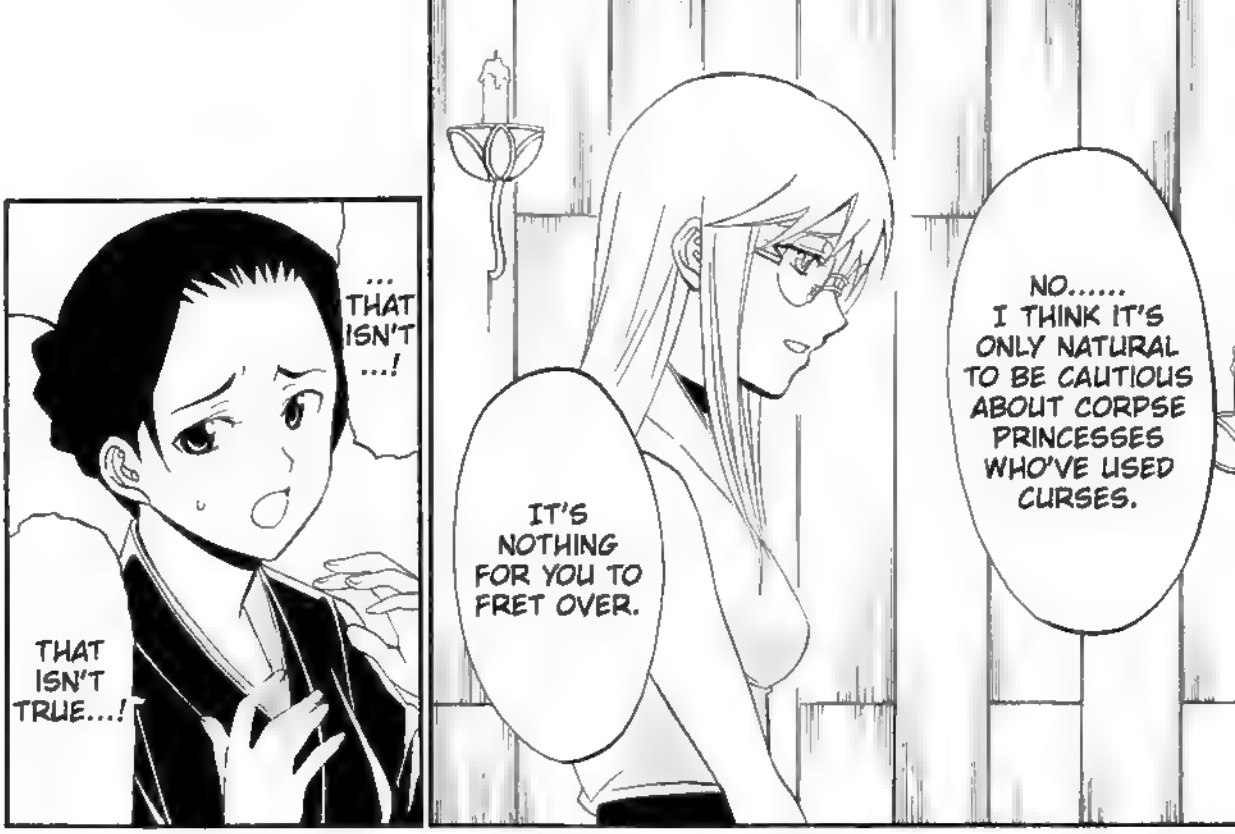

TIME UNTIL OPERATION SEALED DEITY:
30 HOURS


CLATTER


JANGLE


.....
I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, KAMIKA-SAMA.

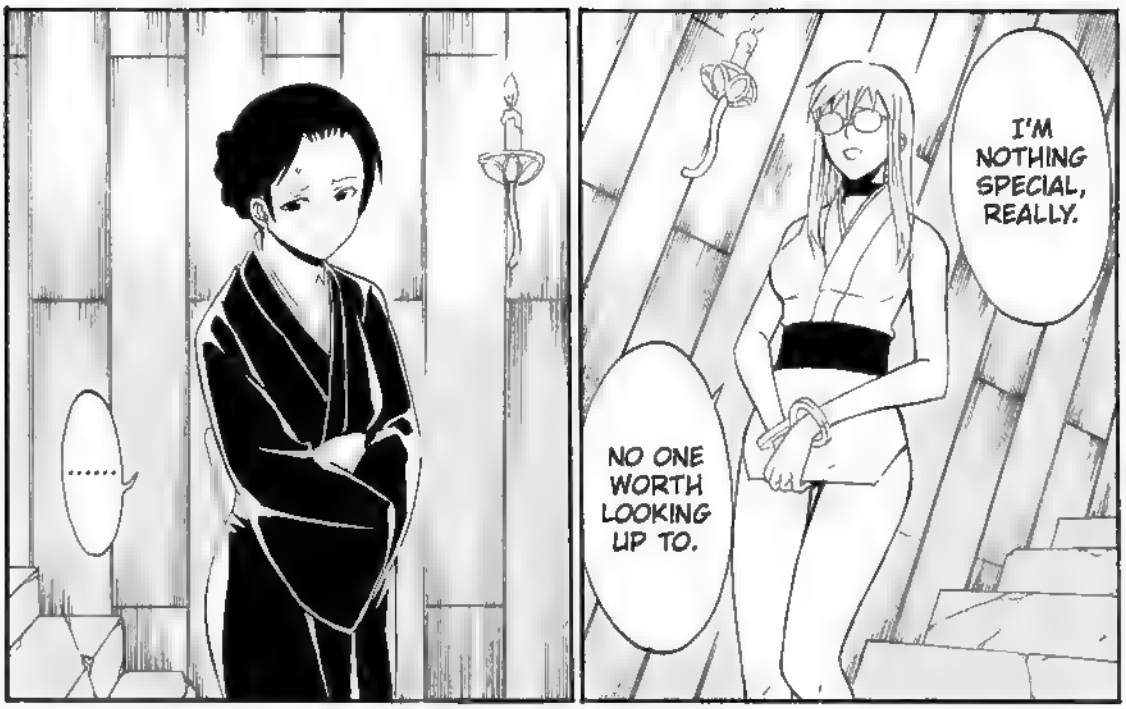
THE SHIKABANE WHO ATTACKED US.....THAT "FOUNDER" WAS DEFEATED BY YOU, KAMIKA-SAMA.
YET NOW YOU MUST BE RESTRAINED. HARDLY A FITTING REWARD .....

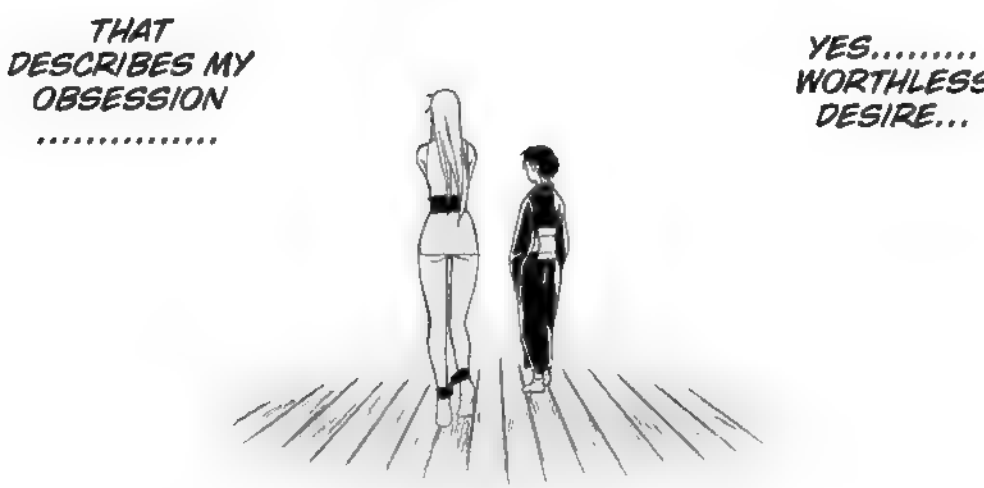

NO.....
I THINK IT'S ONLY NATURAL TO BE CAUTIOUS ABOUT CORPSE PRINCESSES WHO'VE USED CURSES.
IT'S NOTHING FOR YOU TO FRET OVER.
... THAT ISN'T ...!
THAT ISN'T TRUE...!

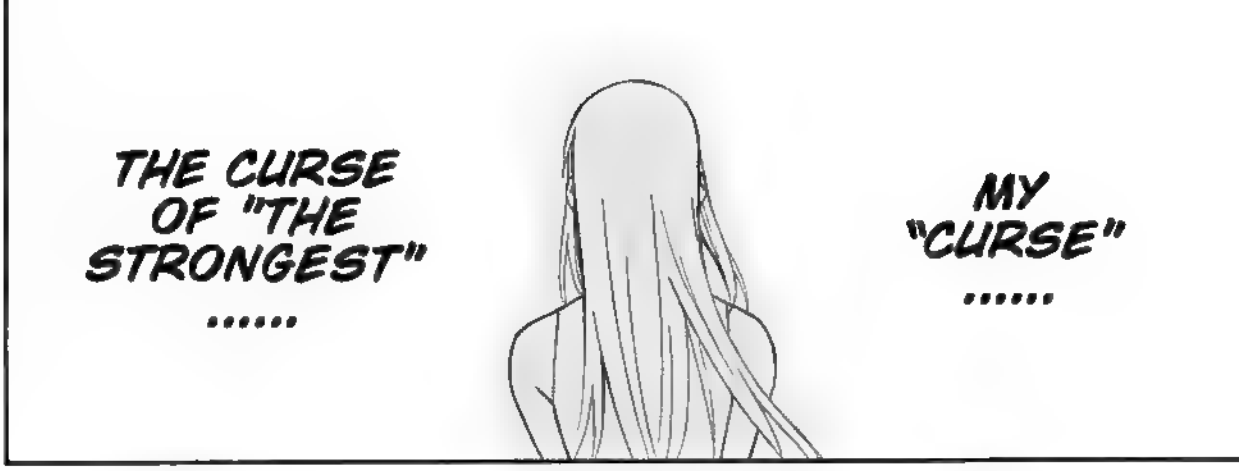
I MEAN..... I...L-LOOK UP TO YOU, KAMIKA-SAMA.....
HOW YOU FIGHT SO BRAVELY, AS "THE STRONGEST" .....
..... THANK YOU.
BUT THAT TITLE IS A FALSE CROWN.....
JUST A NAME GIVEN TO MY PARTICULAR REGRETS. NOTHING MORE.....

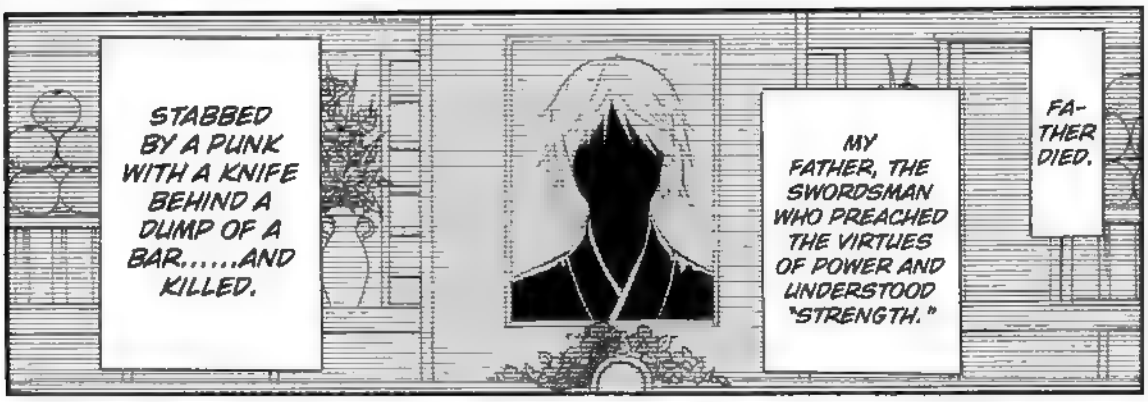
MY TITLE...
...AND THE TRUE NATURE OF MY REGRETS .....

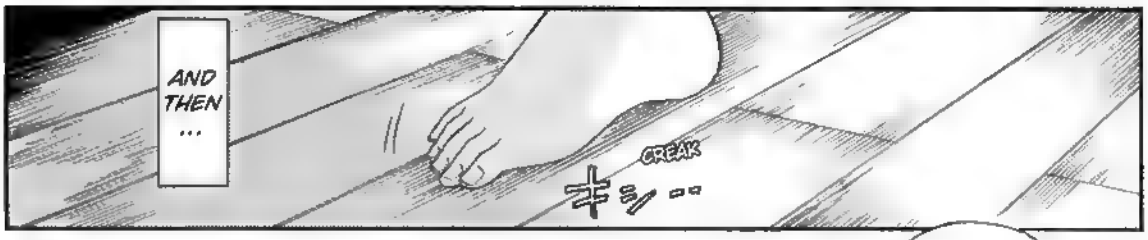
THEY WERE BORN OUT OF FIXATION. NOT IDEALS.
FROM THE DESIRES OF MY WORTHLESS SELF.

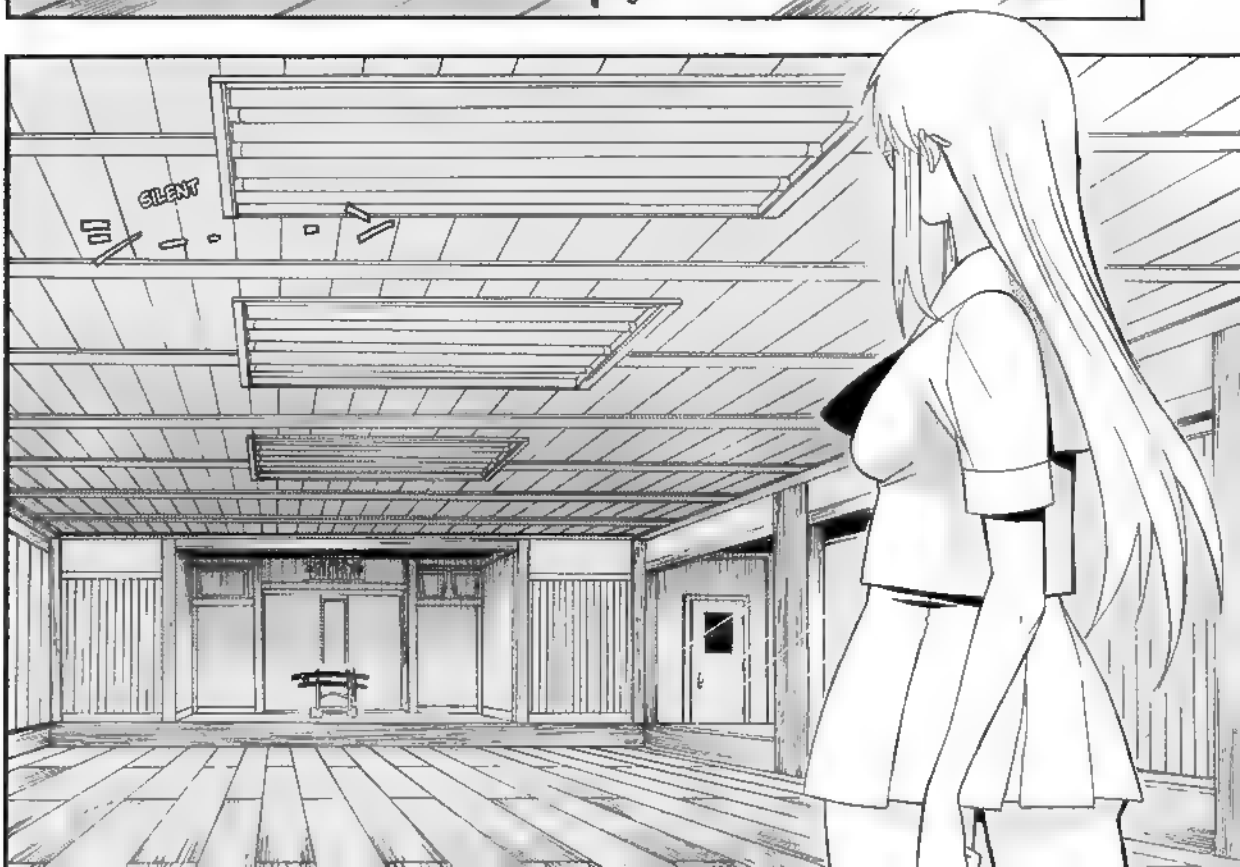

I'M NOTHING SPECIAL, REALLY.
NO ONE WORTH LOOKING UP TO.
.....


YES..... WORTHLESS DESIRE...
THAT DESCRIBES MY OBSESSION .....


THE CURSE OF "THE STRONGEST" .....
MY "CURSE" .....


STABBED BY A PUNK WITH A KNIFE BEHIND A DUMP OF A BAR.....AND KILLED.
MY FATHER, THE SWORDSMAN WHO PREACHED THE VIRTUES OF POWER AND UNDERSTOOD "STRENGTH."
FA-THER DIED.


AND THEN ...
CREAK


SILENT

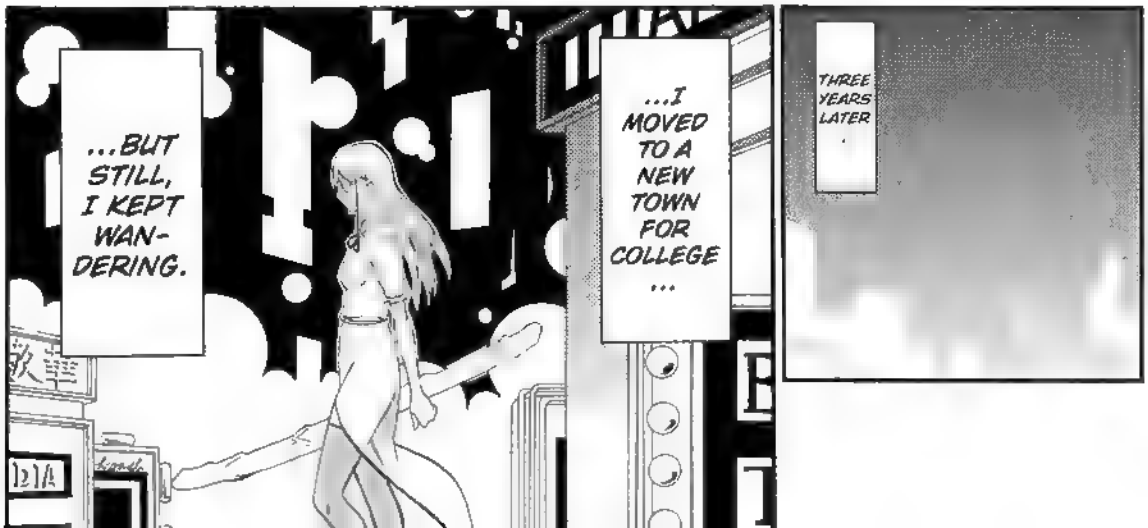
TAG: KAMIKA TODOROKI

WHOA, WHOA. YOU SURE IT'S SAFE TO BE OUT HERE ALONE, BABE?
OOH A HOTTIE WITH GLASSES.
IT'S DANGEROUS HERE. WHAT SAY WE "ESCORT" YOU AROUND UNTIL MORNING?
WELL, YOU'RE COMING WITH US EITHER WAY THOUGH.

AGH
.....
GUH
.....
...I WALKED INTO TOWN EVERY NIGHT.
FROM THEN ON...
DRIP
BUT..... AS TIME WENT ON.....
I MIGHT'VE JUST WANTED TO FIND THE GUY WHO KILLED MY FATHER .....
AT FIRST .....
EVERY TIME I WON..... I BECAME MORE OBSESSED WITH FIGHTING FOR THE SAKE OF IT.
...FOR EVERY OPPO-NENT THAT I BEAT DOWN ...

AN EMPTI-NESS .....
THAT'S WHAT THAT BARREN DOJO PRODUCED IN MY HEART.
I COULD ONLY FILL THAT VOID BY FIGHTING AND WINNING .....

...SO I KEPT FIGHTING... I KEPT WINNING FOR THE PEACE OF MIND IT GAVE ME.....
FIGHT-ING...
... AND WIN-NING.


THREE YEARS LATER
...I MOVED TO A NEW TOWN FOR COLLEGE ...
...BUT STILL, I KEPT WAN-DERING.

...ONE DAY.....
DRIP
DRIP
THEN...
FSSSHWW
SIGH.
.....
JOLT
!?
THEY SAY THAT HAPPINESS ESCAPES WITH EVERY SIGH, YOUNG LADY.

WHEN'D YOU...?
WHO'RE YOU .....!?
HAA.
TURN
ONO
TCH !!
OOV
.....
LOOKING FOR A FIGHT?
A FRIEND OF SOMEONE I'VE BEAT UP IN TOWN.....?
PULL
I'M MERELY BORROWING THIS EAVE UNTIL THE RAIN STOPS.
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR FROM ME, SO PUT THAT DANGEROUS THING AWAY.
I BELONG TO THIS TEMPLE, AND I WAS SITTING HERE BEFORE YOU WERE.
SHUDDER
!!
WITH THAT WOUND ?
GOING?
STEP
FINE.
I'M GOING.

COME TO THINK OF IT, I'VE HEARD TALES OF A STREET FIGHTER AROUND HERE WHO CALLS HERSELF "THE STRONGEST."
FROM A KNIFE? FAIRLY SHALLOW THOUGH.
RIGHT?
MIGHT THAT BE Y—
POINT
WOULDN'T WANT TO GET HURT OVER A MISUNDER-STANDING, WOULD YOU?
.....
I'D STOP ASKING QUESTIONS IF I WERE YOU, MONK.
FSSHH

WHA—
!!
SO YOU NEEDN'T BE SO FRIGHTENED AND JUMPY.
RELAX. I'M NOT CONCERNED WITH THE GOINGS-ON OF SECULAR SOCIETY.
.....
"MIS-UNDER-STAND-ING"?
TAKA-MINE-SENPAI.
!
HOW... HOW RUDE .....
WHO SAID I'M SCARED .....?
MMM... OKAY, SHUT UP.
OOH, NICE. A DRENCHED, FOUR-EYED CUTIE. FORGET MOON-VIEW SAKE—GET A LOAD OF THAT RAIN-VIEW BRA!
...
JUST SOMEONE TAKING SHELTER FROM THE RAIN.
HMM?
..... WHOA, NOW. WHO'S SHE?
WE'VE LOCATED THE ENEMY.

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE !!
OKAY.
ENOUGH IDLE TALK. LET'S GO.

LOOM
TAKE IT BACK .....
WHAT YOU SAID ...
...ABOUT ME BEING SCARED .....!!

!
..... SURE.
SORRY...I APOLOGIZE.
THIS GIRL...!?
GRIND

NOTHING CAN SCARE ME!! BECAUSE..... I'M...
...''THE STRON-GEST''!!
SWIRL
SWIRL

POW
!!
.....
DON'T YOU...
...
DARE MOCK ME!!
...I'M SORRY.
THAT WAS A POOR CHOICE OF WORDS.
I'M JUST..... INTERESTED IN YOU.
?
WHAT'S THAT?
.....
NEVER MIND
.....
STEP
YOUR EYES, THEY...
THEY SEEM TO HOLD GREAT REGRET WITHIN THEM.

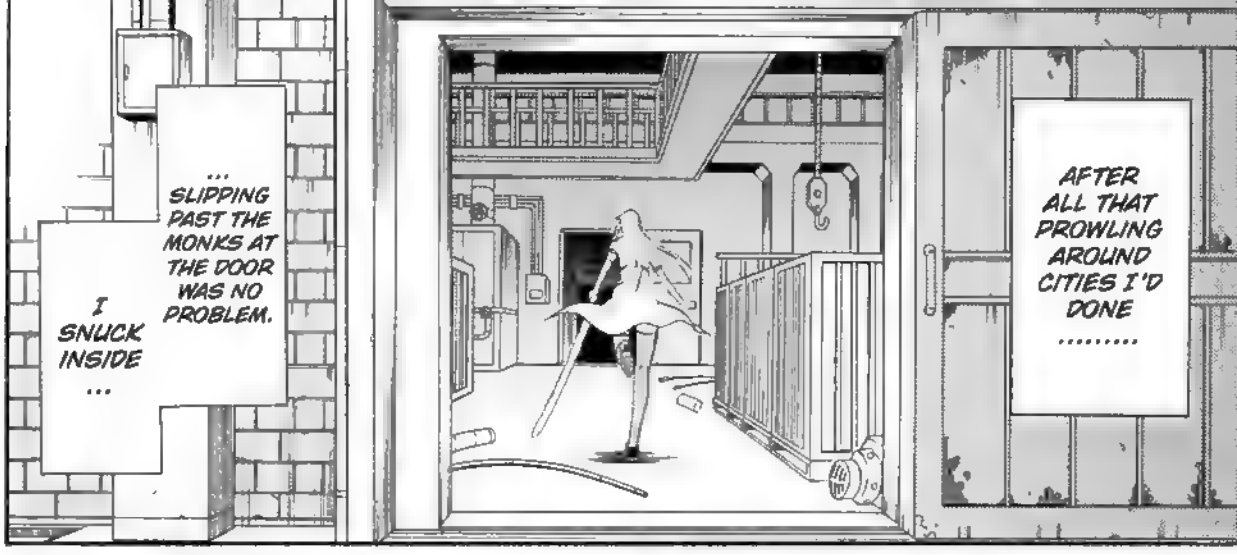
I'M SURE YOU HAVE YOUR REASONS, SO I WON'T ASK.
.....BUT...
...YOU OUGHT TO BE CAREFUL.
EXTREME OBSES-SION...
...CAN RUIN ONE'S BODY— LIKE A POISON.
FOR SOME REASON.....
.....
CLENCH
THAT GOING AFTER HIM WOULD SOMEHOW FILL THE VOID IN ME.....
IT FELT LIKE...A DIVINE REVELATION.
...I REALLY WANTED TO FOLLOW HIM.
...MY FEET STARTED TO FOLLOW HIM.
SO WITH A MIND OF THEIR OWN.....

PEEK

I CHASED THEM INTO THIS BUILD-ING.
WE'VE GOT INVESTI-GATORS GUARDING THE EXITS.
AND THE SHIKA-BANE?

...MY MIND WAS UN-USUALLY CLEAR.
ON THAT DAY .....
SHIKA-BANE?

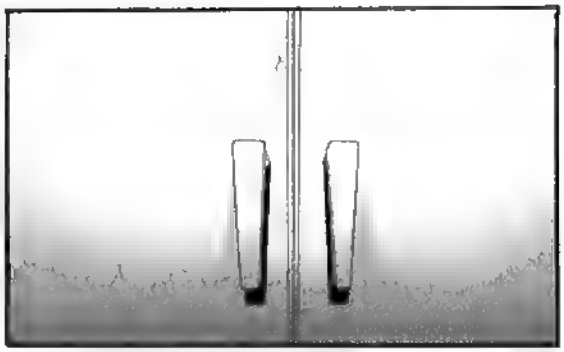
LET'S HEAD IN, SAWA-MIYA.
UNDER-STOOD.
RIGHT.


I SNUCK INSIDE ...
... SLIPPING PAST THE MONKS AT THE DOOR WAS NO PROBLEM.
AFTER ALL THAT PROWLING AROUND CITIES I'D DONE .....

OH ...
WHOOPS
CLINK

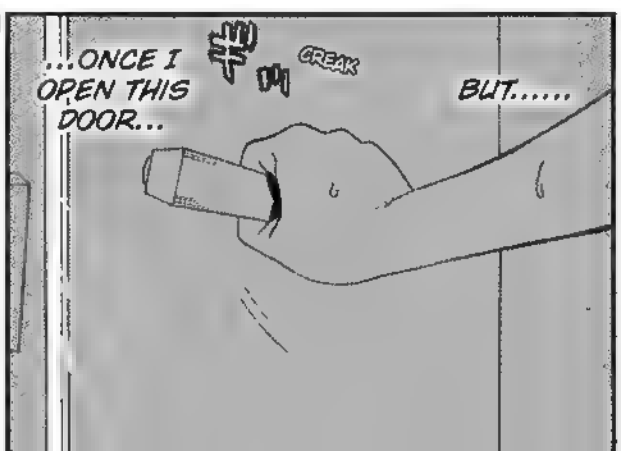
DAMMIT...
I WAS SO FOCUSED ON STAYING HIDDEN THAT I LOST THEM...
...BUT THEY'RE DEFI-NITELY ...
!?
TURN

BADUM
BADUM
BADUM
.....



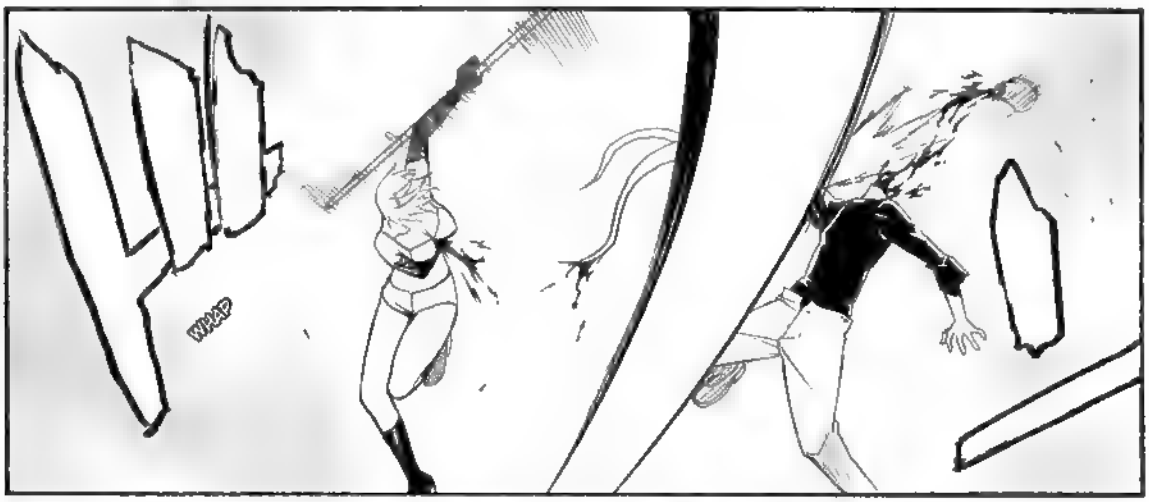
...SOMETHING THAT'LL FILL THIS HOLE IN ME.....IT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR.....!!
I FEEL IT..... WITHOUT A DOUBT..... BEYOND THAT DOOR IS...

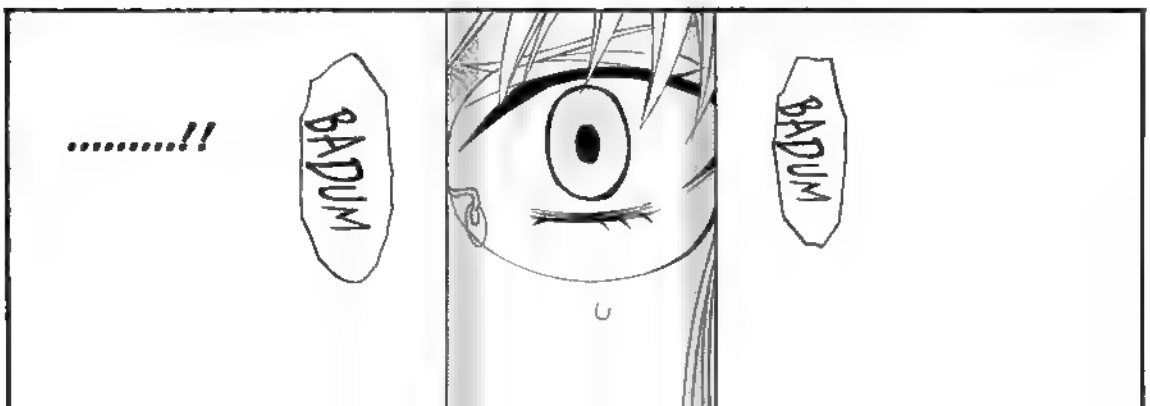
... THERE'S NO TURNING BACK.....
IT FEELS LIKE.....


...ONCE I OPEN THIS DOOR...
CREAK
BUT.....

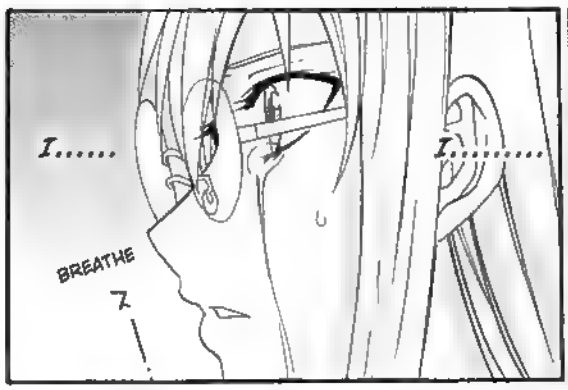
BAM
PIERCE
GIII.
PIERCE
PIERCE
GIIII
!!
POOM
!
TMP

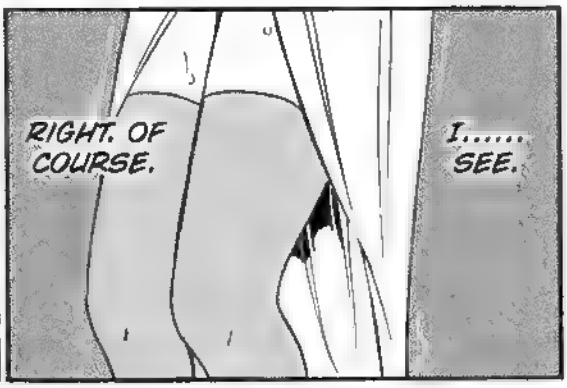
STAB
THRUST
TCH ...!!
FOOM
HEE-HEE-HA-HA-HA-HA-HAAH !!
KYAHA!!
SPURT


WHAP


.....!!
BADUM
BADUM

YES.....
.....


I.....
I.....
BREATHE
Z


RIGHT. OF COURSE.
I..... SEE.

!!
SPLATTER
SPLATTER

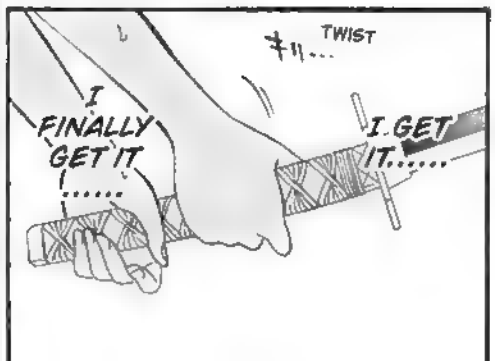
!?
GYAHAH!
LEAP
WHA—
SLAM
WHAM
!!
HAA
HAA
UHH
AH
CLINK

CHOMP
SNAP
GUH .....
GET OUT OF HERE!!
WHAM
WHAM
IDIOT !!
WHAM
WHAM

HAA.
TCH.

...OF THIS VOID INSIDE ME.
THE TRUE NATURE ...
HA HA HA!

HEE.
HEE-HEE ...


TWIST
I FINALLY GET IT .....
I GET IT.....

WHOOSH
...
"DESPAIR."
SLASH
IT'S
.....
DESPAIR OVER FATHER, WHO I THOUGHT WAS THE STRONGEST ...?
NO..... NOT THAT!!
HE'S... FAST.
CHEW
I LOVED FATHER..... BUT NOT BECAUSE HE WAS FAMILY. BECAUSE I THOUGHT HE WAS THE STRONGEST.
SO..... NATURALLY, I THOUGHT...
...THAT AT SOME POINT...
...HE'D PASS THAT ON TO ME
.....
SNAP

...DESPAIR
.....
...AND NOT GETTING WHAT YOU WANT LEADS TO...
POW
SLAM
MORESO EVEN THAN FATHER..... IN A DEEPER WAY...
DRIP
DRIP
FOR A LONG TIME NOW.....
STEP
HEE.

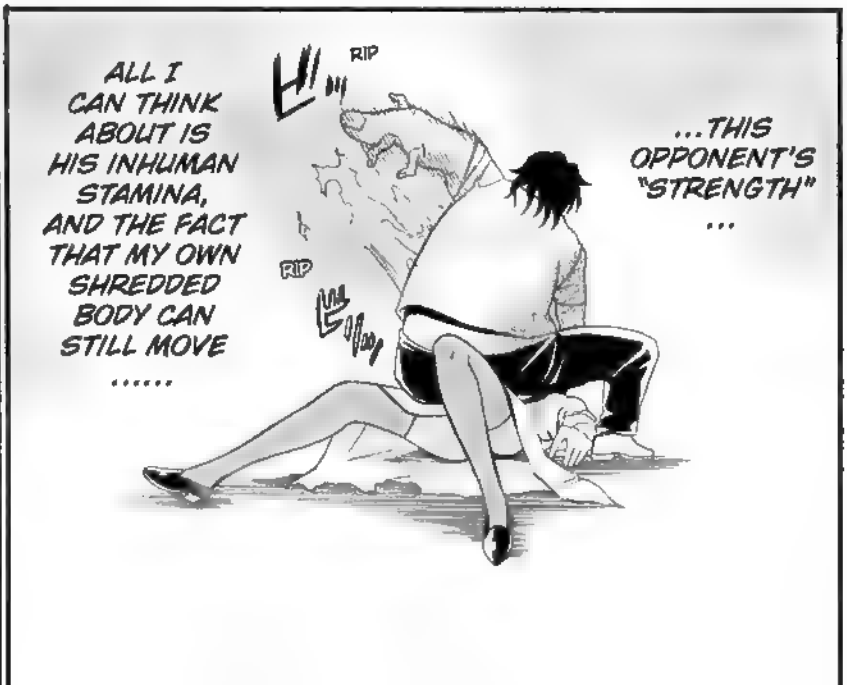
...WITH BEING "THE STRONGEST" .....
...I'VE BEEN COMPLETELY OBSESSED .....
GUH.
UHH ...

I'M SO.....
...WORTHLESS .....!!
POW!

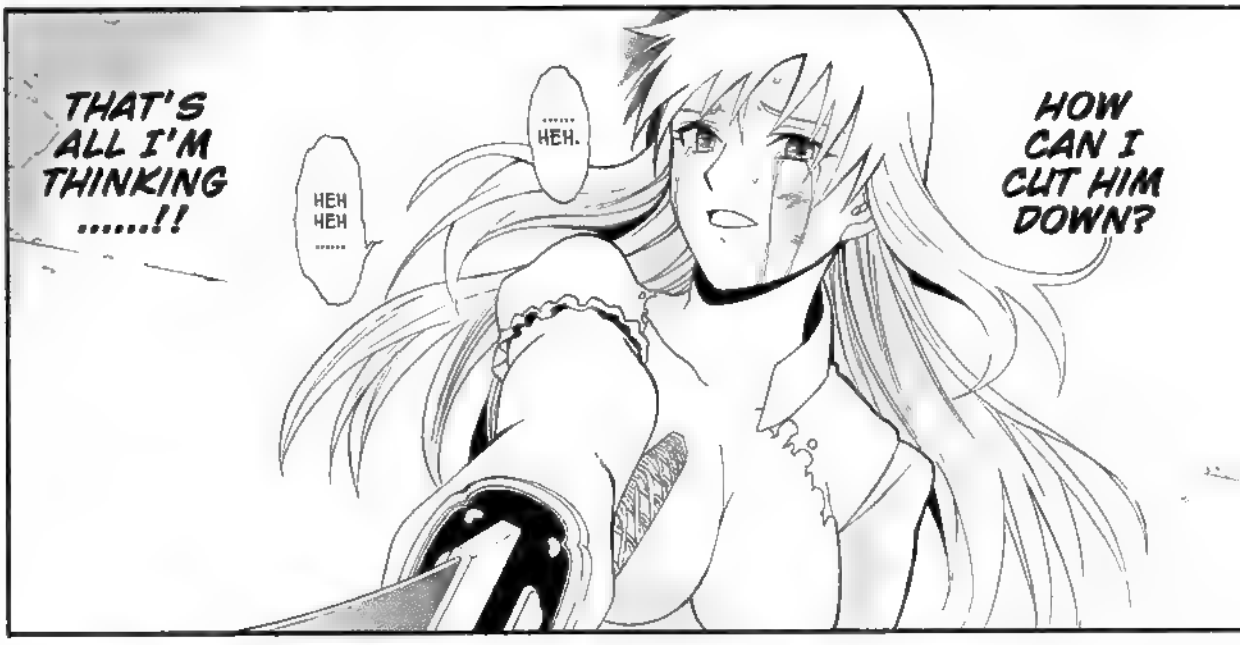
EVEN NOW.....

...I WAS ONLY ABLE TO SEE THINGS AS "STRONG" OR "WEAK" .....!
SLAM
IN THE END, I .....

AND ABOUT .....
...HOW I CAN POSSIBLY WIN THIS .....


ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT IS HIS INHUMAN STAMINA, AND THE FACT THAT MY OWN SHREDDED BODY CAN STILL MOVE .....
RIP
RIP
...THIS OPPONENT'S "STRENGTH" ...

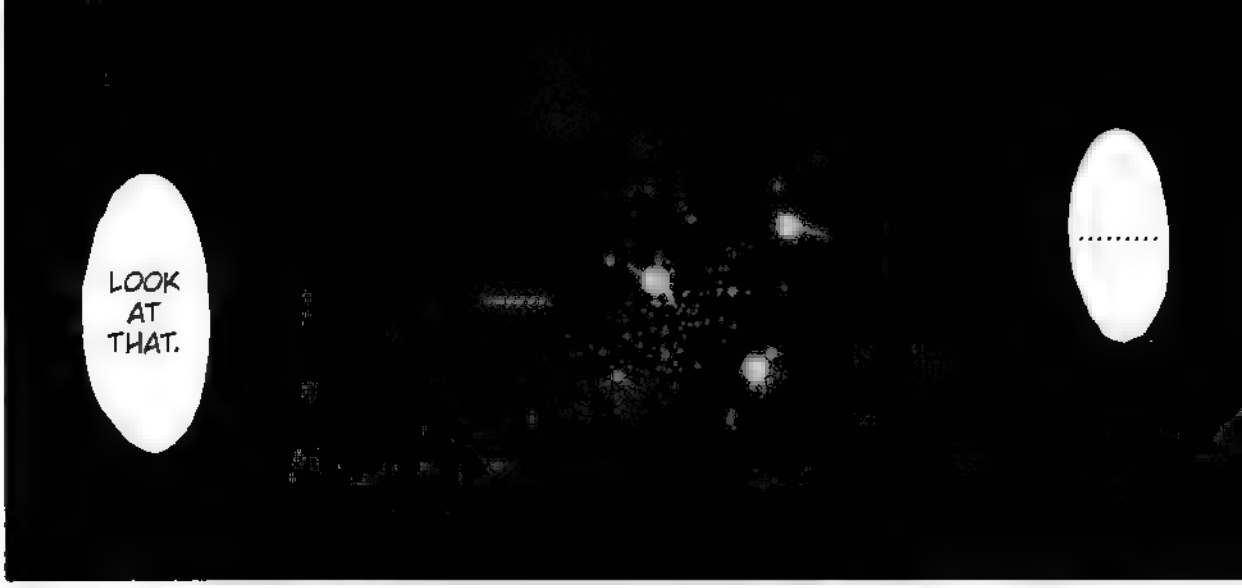
...
SLICE
STAB


THAT'S ALL I'M THINKING .....!!
HEH HEH .....
.....HEH.
HOW CAN I CUT HIM DOWN?

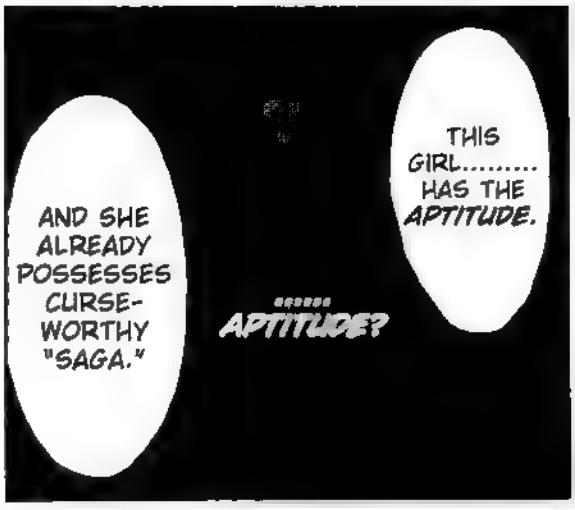
SLICE
OH ...
HHHHHO

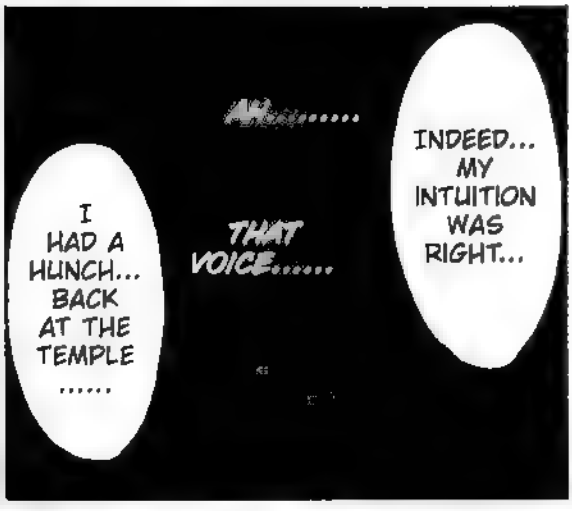
AHHHH!!
UWAHH .....

POW
GYAHEE !!
AH!!
I WANNA CUT HIM ……
HAA…
HAA…
カラン
CLATTER
……
GUH …
KEE… EE…
DRIP
DRIP
AHH …
I WANNA CUT …!!
I WANNA CUT …!!!


LOOK AT THAT.
.....

TAKAMINE-SENPAI?
HUH.....? WHAT'S THIS.....?
I CAN'T BELIEVE SHE TAILED US.....
GETTING A CIVILIAN INVOLVED IN ALL THIS.....


AND SHE ALREADY POSSESSES CURSE-WORTHY "SAGA."
APTITUDE?
THIS GIRL..... HAS THE APTITUDE.


I HAD A HUNCH... BACK AT THE TEMPLE .....
AH.....
THAT VOICE.....
INDEED... MY INTUITION WAS RIGHT...

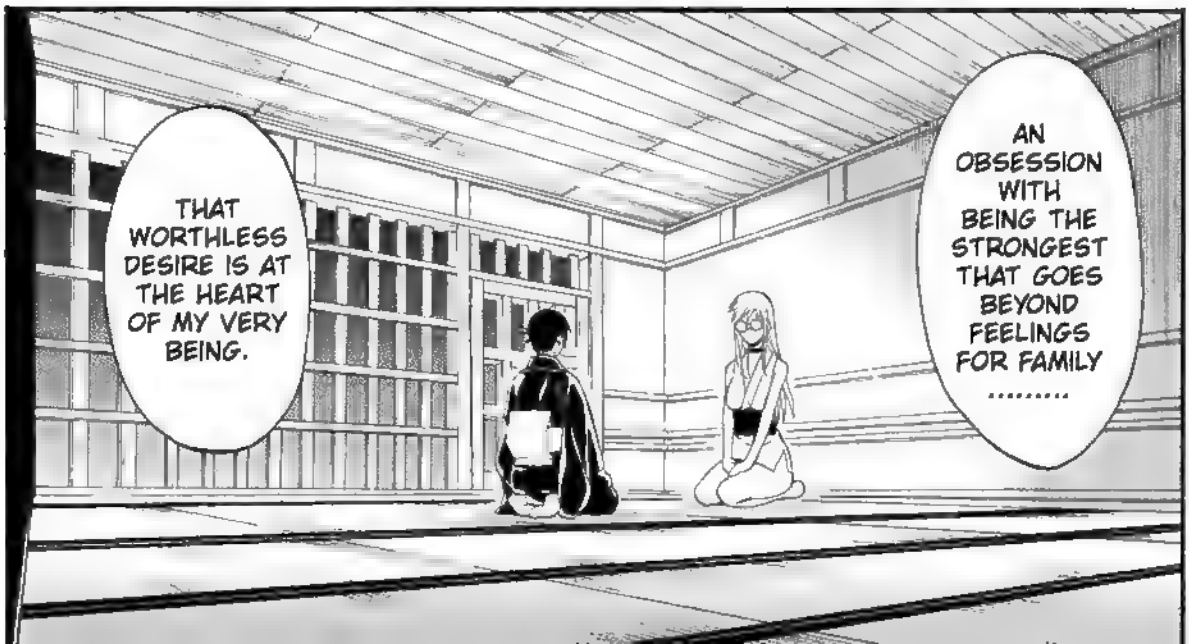
LET'S JUST ASK HER.
SHINE
SERIOUSLY? .....BUT...

HEY.
YOUNG LADY.
SHOULD WE ALLOW YOU TO DIE HERE ?
OR...
...DO YOU STILL HAVE UNFULFILLED REGRETS?

TCH
.....
UNFULFILLED
...
...REGRETS
.....

I WANT TO BE..... "THE STRONGEST" .....
STRENGTH CAPABLE OF..... CLEAVING EVERYTHING...
"STRENGTH" ...

YES.
.....


THAT WORTHLESS DESIRE IS AT THE HEART OF MY VERY BEING.
AN OBSESSION WITH BEING THE STRONGEST THAT GOES BEYOND FEELINGS FOR FAMILY .....

B-BUT! IT'S THANKS TO YOUR POWER THAT THAT SHIKABANE WAS DEFEATED, KAMIKA-SAMA .....
SO... PLEASE DON'T BE SO SELF-DEPRECATING .....!

WH-WHY ARE YOU HERE?
TAKA-MINE-SAMA!?
IT'S ONLY NATURAL.
HMM?
I'M YOUR CON-TRACTING MONK.
CREAK
I DON'T REMEMBER MAKING A CORPSE PRINCESS OUT OF ANYONE WORTH-LESS.
THAT'S RIGHT.

STOMP
STOMP
STOMP
AND IT WAS CLEAR TO ME THAT THERE WAS MORE TO YOU THAN MET THE EYE.
SOME SOULS MUST FIGHT FOR SALVATION.
IF YOU'D BEEN TRULY WORTHLESS, I WOULDN'T HAVE EVEN GIVEN YOU THE TIME OF DAY BEFORE.

Corpse Princess 10 End

"TAKE CARE. OUR SECT'S DUTY IS TO PROTECT THIS NATION." SO SAYS DAI-SOUJOU SHINZE KAMIU. HIS EDICT CONCERNS "OPERATION SEALED DEITY," THE MISSION TO TAKE OUT THE ENEMIES' KING. IN THIS DO-OR-DIE PLAN, ONLY ONE THING MATTERS TO OURI—DEFEATING THE SEVEN STARS, FOR THEY ARE THE TARGETS OF MAKINA'S REGRETS. IT'S ALL ON THE LINE IN THE BATTLE AGAINST THE UNCLEAN BUNCH.

SHIKABANE KILLS NEEDED FOR CORPSE PRINCESS MAKINA HOSHIMURA TO ASCEND TO HEAVEN: 92

11 volume COMING SOON

SPECIAL 4-PANEL COMICS: "SAKI'S CASUAL CLASH-FILLED JOURNEY"

VICTORY
KACHING
...I'M GONNA TAKE DOWN (AT LEAST) FOUR CORPSE PRINCESSES!!
YAY.
MY REMATCH AGAINST THAT GIRL IS COMING..... TO PREPARE FOR IT...
RIGHT. NEXT IS SAWAMIYA.
I'LL CHALLENGE HER TO A BOWLING MATCH!!
GEH-HEH-HEH.
HEH-HEH ....."THE STRONGEST" AIN'T SO HOT WHEN IT'S NOT HER SPECIALTY.
OH?
POINT
YOU'RE FIRST, KAMIKA!! I'M STARTING WITH YOU!!
TUG
IF YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN WIN AGAINST THE ONE THEY CALL "THE STRONGEST" CORPSE PRINCESS .....
SWIRL
SWIRL
FU-FU... VERY WELL.
...I CAN'T READ HER.
ACK...
SHE HAS HER OWN GLOVE?
...WE'LL BE FIGHTING VIA A CARD GAME.
BAM
NOT HAND-TO-HAND.
EH!?
CARDBOARD
WELL, BECAUSE I DO REALLY NEED TO WIN HERE...

HERE WE GO. WHEN I SAY "SHOOT."
ROCK, PAPER...
...
SHOOT !!
EHH !?
HOLD ON.....
NO FAIR...
SAKI
ITSUKI
MAKINA
SHOCK
PERFECT GAME
CRUSHING DEFEAT
SHE'S GOOD...
THERE'S ITSUKI-CHIN AND MAKINAN !!
!!
RISE
CRAP..... I CAN'T GO BACK HOME IN SHAME ...!!
...
HUH? SAKI-CHAN?
FACE YOU? IN WHAT?
WAIT RIGHT THERE, YOU TWO!! FACE ME!!
ROAR
SAKI'S CASUAL CLASH-FILLED JOURNEY:
1 WIN, 1 LOSS, 1 TIE
SILENT
R- ROCK, PAPER, SCISSORS !!
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
EH..... EHH... UM.

CORPSE PRINCESS

AKAHITO YOSHIICHI

SOUGEN TAKAMINE

HEIGHT: 171 CM WEIGHT: 65 KG
BLOOD TYPE: O
BIRTHDAY: MARCH 31ST AGE: 55

FAVORITE THINGS:
PROBIOTIC DRINKS, SOY MILK
LEAST FAVORITE THINGS: ALCOHOL
SPECIAL ABILITIES: THINKING ABOUT TWO THINGS SIMULTANEOUSLY

KAMIKA TODOROKI

HEIGHT: 170 CM WEIGHT: 50 KG
BLOOD TYPE: O BIRTHDAY: MAY 12TH
AGE AT DEATH: 20

FAVORITE THINGS: JAPANESE KATANA (EVERY IMAGINABLE VARIETY)
LEAST FAVORITE THINGS: CROWDS (SHE STARTS FEELING SICK)
SPECIAL ABILITIES: ESTIMATING DISTANCES (WITH DECENT ACCURACY)

?
SIP
HMM... SO YOUNG. YOU'D NEVER THINK THIS WAS TAKEN 13 YEARS AGO... DOES THE KOUGON SECT HAVE SOME HIDDEN TECHNIQUE TO PRESERVE YOUTH?

TRANSLATION NOTES

OVERALL

Japanese Buddhism has a complex ranking system for its monks called *soukan* (*sou* meaning "monk," and *kan* implying hierarchy). Monks in this story often address each other by rank.

PAGE 50

"Shukuchi" literally means "reduced earth," and refers to teleportation thought to be used by religious ascetics to cover great distances quickly. In manga and anime, characters often use shukuchi-like techniques in battle by moving so quickly that they seem to be warping.

PAGE 72

"Iai" refers to the art of drawing the sword from the scabbard and slashing in a single movement.

PAGE 112

"Namu" is a word that appears at the start of many different mantras. It can be thought of as analogous to "amen."

PAGE 175

Umehara's attempt at a lewd joke compares "moon-view sake" (sake meant especially for moon-viewing parties) to Kamika's "rain-view bra" (because her top becomes see-through in the rain).

CORPSE PRINCESS ⑩

Yoshiichi Akahito

Translation: Caleb D. Cook
Lettering: Bianca Pistillo

This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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